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METROPOLITAN
SPECIAL COLLECTION

THROUGH THIRTY YEARS

THROUGH THIRTY YEARS

1892—1922

A Personal Narrative

BY
HENRY WICKHAM STEED
AUTHOR OF
"THE HAPSBURG MONARCHY"

VOLUME II

LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN LTD.
NEW YORK: DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & CO.

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Vol: 2

First published, November 1924
New Impressions, Nov., 1924, *Feb., April,* 1925

REORGANISATION
Stock No.
Classification No. V 500·804

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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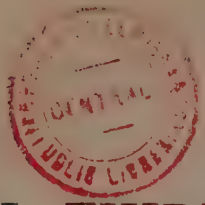

THROUGH THIRTY YEARS

CHAPTER XI

WAR
1914

THE days between the presentation of the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum to Serbia on July 23d and the British declaration of war against Germany on August 4, 1914, were the most formidable period of crisis through which England had passed since the Napoleonic era. No useful purpose would be served by recounting in detail the episodes that marked them or by dissecting anew the diplomatic documents which passed between European governments. This work has been ably done by others, notably by Mr. J. W. Headlam-Morley in his "History of Twelve Days"; and it will doubtless be done again by future historians. To me, the issue appeared painfully simple. Germany and Austria-Hungary were bent on war; they were anxious to secure British neutrality; and the only chance, no matter how vain it might be, of deflecting them from their purpose, seemed to lie in proclaiming that the provocation of war by the Central Powers would leave England no choice but to oppose them with all her strength.

Sir Edward Grey thought otherwise. His was the responsibility of the statesman, whereas the responsibility of *The Times* was that of a great and independent journal exercising some measure of trusteeship for the public. Of Sir Edward Grey's honesty and devotion to peace there could be no doubt; and though, at the time, I thought he did not go as far as he might have gone in making plain the course which England must take if war were wantonly brought on, I have since come to see, and have publicly admitted that, in the circumstances,

his action was wise. The ignorance in which public opinion in Great Britain and British Dominions had been left as to the true situation in Europe; the failure of the Government to prepare an adequate army for a Continental campaign; and the vague pacifism and less vague pro-Germanism which influenced a large section of the Liberal Party and not a few members of the Cabinet, made it imperative that, if anything like national or imperial unity of purpose were to be attained, the issues of right and wrong, honour and dishonour, national security and national peril should be so sharply defined that none but the cowardly or the perverse could evade them. If, in any degree, England is morally answerable for the outbreak of the war, those Englishmen must bear the blame who shut their eyes to the evidence of facts, lulled themselves in illusions of eternal peace, listened to the false prophets who declared war "unthinkable" because it would be "economically unsound," and threw the weight of their influence against the national preparedness for which Lord Roberts had striven valiantly and in vain.

THE CAMPAIGN OF "THE TIMES"

Thus, if it was the duty of the responsible directors of British foreign policy to be prudent to the point of giving no hint of the action that must be taken in certain contingencies, and to leave no loophole for suspicion that the British Government cared for aught save the preservation of an honourable peace, it was clearly the duty of *The Times* to warn the public at home and abroad that, if war were forced upon Europe, England would stand by her friends. The discharge of this duty was not easy. Mere denunciation of German and Austro-Hungarian designs would have aroused controversy in which the British journals that drew their information from the German Embassy, or its agents, would have enjoyed the advantage always possessed by those who are in a position to make coloured statements which others may not be able immediately to refute. Few Englishmen realize, even to-day, how strong was then the hold of German official and unofficial

propagandists over a considerable section of the British press, many British politicians and wide circles of "Society." Similarly, had *The Times* merely advocated loyalty to the Entente with France, the cry would have arisen that England could not fight "for Alsace-Lorraine," just as it had already arisen that she could not fight "for Serbia." There remained one argument which none could effectively gainsay. It was that England could not suffer Europe to be ruled by any supreme military power and that, at bottom, the question for her in 1914 was identical with the question she had solved a century before, against another foe, at Trafalgar and at Waterloo. While supporting vigorously Sir Edward Grey's diplomatic efforts to preserve peace, *The Times* kept this issue to the fore. On July 25th it criticized in measured words the unnecessarily offensive terms of the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum to Serbia, warned foreign Powers not to count upon the effect of domestic troubles in the British Isles, and added:

> The danger of a conflagration is very serious to all the Powers, but assuredly to none of them is it half so serious as to Austria-Hungary herself. She might easily find, were complications to follow, that, in order to save herself from a danger which could be met in other ways, she has placed the very existence of the Monarchy at stake. No effort should be spared to save her and to save Europe from so grievous a mistake.

And, after Serbia had accepted all but one of the humiliating Austro-Hungarian demands and had not categorically rejected even that one — though no shred of evidence had then or has ever been produced to connect her Government with the Sarajevo assassinations — *The Times* wrote on July 27th:

> Peace, indeed, is the first interest of the Entente and the first interest of England. Both will spare no efforts to preserve it. But any plans which may be based on the supposition that the policy of either has changed, or is likely to change, are doomed to disappointment and to failure. Our friendships are firm, as our aims are free from all suspicion of aggression. While we can hope to preserve peace by working with the Great Powers who are not immediate Parties to this dangerous quarrel, we shall consider that end above all else. But should there arise in any quarter a desire to test our adhesion to the principles that inform our friendships

and that thereby guarantee the balance of power in Europe, we shall be found no less ready and determined to vindicate them with the whole strength of the Empire than we have been found ready whenever we have been tried in the past. That, we conceive, interest, duty and honour demand from us. England will not hesitate to answer to their call.

On July 28th, when the European situation seemed less threatening, *The Times* applauded the " characteristic indifference to considerations of personal and national *amour propre* where great and urgent issues are at stake," with which Sir Edward Grey had " taken prompt action in the cause of peace, at the risk of what might be considered a diplomatic rebuff." As soon as he heard that Austria-Hungary had broken off diplomatic relations with Serbia, he brushed formalities aside and enquired whether the German, French and Italian Governments would authorize their ambassadors to meet him in conference in London in order to find means of arranging " the present difficulties." At the same time he invited those Governments to instruct their representatives in Vienna, St. Petersburg and Belgrade to inform the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Serbian Governments of his proposal and to ask them to suspend all military operations pending the result. But when his proposal was rejected and Austria-Hungary declared war against Serbia on July 28th, *The Times* wrote, on July 29th, that the people of England

know what the Serbian war would mean to the whole world. But they know, too, that the surest way to preserve that peace for which they long, and perhaps the only way, is to make clear to all that, if their friends are forced into such war, England will, for her part, support them to the full. . . . We trust that our fidelity is not going to be tried by the most terrible of all tests. We shall spare no pains and refrain from no exertions to avert a calamity so dire to all the governments and all the peoples of Europe. But should our efforts in this behalf prove vain, England will be found as ready to stand by her friends to-day as ever she was to stand by them when she was aiding Europe to fling off the despotism of Napoleon.

By July 30th, the outlook was darker. It was clear that mobilization was proceeding in Germany and that Russia was

likewise calling out her reserves. The Austro-Hungarian official press was proclaiming that the Dual Monarchy was ready to meet all comers, arms in hand, and that its policy and the policy of Germany "move along the same road." On that day *The Times* wrote that, in the event of the intervention of another Great Power in the Austro-Serbian struggle, the British Government and nation reserved for themselves the most complete liberty of action. It added:

> If France is menaced, or the safety of the Belgian frontier which we have guaranteed with her and with Prussia by treaties that Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1870 confirmed, we shall know how to act. We can no more afford to see France crushed by Germany, or the balance of power upset against France, than Germany can afford to see Austria-Hungary crushed by Russia and that balance upset against Austrian and Hungarian interests. Upon that issue, should it become an issue to be determined by arms, our friends and our enemies will find that we think and act with one accord. The great [Napoleonic] war lasted for a quarter of a century, and for the whole of that time it killed, for all practical purposes, not only faction but party amongst us. We knew then, and we know now, that when we strike for the vital interests of the Crown and of the Nation, we must strike as one man. That it was that gave us the victory against the world in arms; that it is, as we feel and know, which will give us the victory again if we are forced into the field.

By midnight on July 30th, hopes of preserving peace had almost vanished. In the House of Commons that evening the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, had withdrawn his motion giving precedence to the Home Rule Amending Bill and had explained that he took this course because the House was meeting under conditions of gravity which were almost without parallel. "When the issues of peace and war are hanging in the balance," he said, "it is in the interests of the whole world that England should present a united front and be able to speak and act with the authority of an undivided nation." Sir Edward Grey stated that "we are still working for the one great object of preserving European peace," but that "it has not been found possible for the Powers to unite in diplomatic action."

The Foreign Secretary could not state publicly, at that mo-

ment, that the attitude of Germany foreshadowed her intervention in the war, and that, on the previous afternoon, July 29th, he had warned the German Ambassador in London (Prince Lichnowsky) that, if war ensued, it would not be possible to depend on England keeping out of it. Nor could he divulge the fact that, on July 30th, the German Emperor's brother, Prince Henry of Prussia, on returning to Germany from a visit to England, had sent a telegram to King George suggesting, as the only chance of preserving peace, that England should "try to secure the neutrality of France and Russia,"— so as to allow Austria-Hungary to crush Serbia at her leisure. But news of the German mobilization was hourly expected, and it was certain that French mobilization would follow immediately. Yet, within the British Cabinet and without, desperate efforts were being made by the partisans of Germany to persuade England to stand aside. In *The Times* office we knew of those efforts, and therefore wrote, on the morning of July 31st, that, in the event of a German and a French mobilization, the duty of England would be plain.

We must make instant preparations to back our friends, if they are made the subject of unjust attack. That is not merely the duty of friendship. It is the elementary duty of self-preservation. The days of "splendid isolation," if they ever existed, are no more. We cannot stand alone in a Europe dominated by any single Power, or any single group of Powers. Were our friends to be attacked and vanquished, not merely our position as a Great Power, but our safety within our own shores would be gone. No concessions and no obsequiency upon our part could long satisfy the ambitions of the victors. They would apply to us, sooner rather than later, the principles of *Realpolitik* in the harshest and the most domineering form. We should be at their mercy; for, did we stand aside when the vital interests of our friends were at stake, we should justly find ourselves deserted when our own hour of trial came. It is not merely our honour which bids us be true to our friends. It is consideration for our own welfare and our own security. Were we to show weakness or pusillanimity now, none would trust us again. We should be hated by the friends we had abandoned, and despised by the rivals before whose threats we had flinched. We shall still work on for peace; work on for it to the very end; but the hour has come when we, too, may have to make instant preparations for war. The Angel of Death is abroad. We "may almost hear the

beating of his wings." He may yet "spare us and pass on"; but if he visits those with whom we stand, we must pay our share of the fell tribute with stout hearts.

A DISQUIETING RUMOUR

The final proofs of this article — which, like its predecessors, was written by that splendid literary veteran, Mr. J. W. Flanagan, who wields one of the finest pens in England — had hardly been revised when, towards midnight on Thursday, July 30th, one of the younger members of the Conservative Party, Sir (then Mr.) George Lloyd, afterwards Governor of Bombay, came into my room. "It's all up," he said. "The Government are going to 'rat.'"

"You don't mean that they are going to back down to Germany and betray the country?" I exclaimed.

"Yes," he answered. "I have just left General Sir Henry Wilson, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, who has told me what the position is."

"What are the Opposition [Conservative] leaders doing?" I asked.

"They are going into the country to play lawn tennis," he ejaculated bitterly. "Balfour, Bonar Law, and the whole lot of them. You forget that Monday is Bank Holiday!"

"Can't you go and gather them?" I enquired.

"Maxse [editor of the *National Review*] and I were thinking of that," returned my visitor. "We might go in motor cars and fetch them."

They went to "fetch" them — with the result that the leaders of the Conservative (or Unionist) Party, met at the residence of Lord Lansdowne on the Saturday, August 1st, and wrote to the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, the historic letter in which they pledged their support to the Government in the national emergency. Though their letter was not immediately communicated to the Cabinet, it contributed greatly to strengthen Mr. Asquith's hands and to steady public opinion.

Public opinion needed to be steadied, for strong subterranean influences were at work to bewilder both it and the Govern-

ment and to intimidate the supporters of a firm policy. On Friday, July 31st, the Bank of England raised its discount rate from 4 to 8 per cent. and its rate for short loans to 10½ per cent. The Stock Exchange was closed *sine die*, and the private banks restricted payments in gold. Shippers paid, without a murmur, premiums of 60 and 70 per cent. to insure cargoes and vessels against war risks. Though its outward demeanour was calm, the City trembled on the verge of a panic. For some time German banks had been "unloading" their foreign securities on to the London market; and a large German billbroker in London was understood to hold some £13,000,000 worth of private British bills. A breathing space was obviously necessary for the improvisation of measures to meet the emergency, and the leading bankers conferred with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider them.

These circumstances help to explain, though they cannot justify, an attempt which was made, on July 31st, to silence *The Times*. At the urgent request of the head of one of the chief financial houses in the City, the financial editor of *The Times*, Mr. Hugh Chisholm, called upon him, and was actually told that the leading articles in *The Times* must cease immediately. Those articles, the financial magnate claimed, were hounding the country into war. The City of London, he declared, was on the brink of a catastrophe such as the world had never seen. The only way to avert it would be for England to maintain strict neutrality. He produced a letter he had written to the head of the Paris house of his family, and gave it to Mr. Chisholm to read. The sense of it was that a terrible financial crisis was impending, that the writer had only £1,000,000 in the Bank of England and £800,000 in the Union of London and Smith's Bank — barely enough to meet his engagements, and that his Paris relatives should draw no more cheques or bills upon him since he could not pay them.

When Mr. Chisholm had read this letter, the financial magnate denounced once more the policy of *The Times* as catastrophic, insisted that the leading articles must cease at once, and that *The Times* should advocate neutrality.

A WELL-DESERVED SNUB

Mr. Chisholm, who resented intensely so gross an impropriety, replied that, though he was not responsible for the policy of *The Times*, he agreed with it; and that while he would convey to the editor and to Lord Northcliffe the sense of the magnate's remarks, he could not in any way guarantee that they would be taken into consideration. Then he withdrew and, to his credit, never saw that magnate again.

Returning to *The Times* office, Mr. Chisholm informed Lord Northcliffe and the editor, and afterwards attended the daily editorial conference. Lord Northcliffe, who presided, said, "I think Mr. Chisholm has something to say." Chisholm then repeated his interview with the financial magnate. He was still white with rage. When he had finished, Lord Northcliffe asked my opinion.

"It is a dirty German-Jewish international financial attempt to bully us into advocating neutrality," I said, "and the proper answer would be a still stiffer leading article to-morrow."

"I agree with you," said Lord Northcliffe. "Let us go ahead."

We went ahead. The leading article on Saturday, August 1st, therefore concluded thus:

The policy to be adopted by Great Britain in the last resort remains clear and unmistakable. We desire peace and shall continue to do our utmost to preserve it. If we feel compelled to draw the sword, we shall do so with the utmost reluctance and without animosity. For us, whatever may befall, this cannot be a war of international hatred. We have nothing to avenge and nothing to acquire. In this vital issue we can only be guided by two considerations — the duty we owe to our friends and the instinct of self-preservation. The second reason is the most powerful one, and, if necessity arises, must be held to be decisive. We dare not stand aside with folded arms and placidly watch our friends placed in peril of destruction. Should we remain passive, should the fortune of war go against those whose interests march with our own, we know full well that it would be our turn next. None would then raise a hand to save us. Peace is not, at such a moment, our strongest interest, however dear it may be to us, and however earnestly we may strive to maintain it. Our strongest interest is

the law of self-preservation, which is common to all humanity. The armies now marshalling against our friends, challenge, in reality, our security not less than theirs. Soberly but resolutely, we must play our part in this unprecedented encounter should the need arise. And if we have to intervene, the whole country will shrink from no sacrifice to emerge victorious from a struggle which may even threaten our national existence.

I shall always remember Saturday, August 1st, as the most terrible day of my life. It was known that Germany was about to declare war upon Russia, and that war between Germany and France would follow immediately. The one question was whether England would stand firm. Towards midday Lord Northcliffe asked me to be at *The Times* office by 4 P.M. to attend a special conference in his room. The conference consisted of four persons, Lord Northcliffe, a prominent member of the staff of *The Times,* an equally prominent member of the staff of another newspaper which Lord Northcliffe controlled, and myself. I should explain that, since I was foreign editor of *The Times,* the European crisis had throughout been regarded as my special province, and I had been directly responsible for framing, subject to the sanction of the editor, the policy of the paper in regard to it. Knowing what I knew of the European situation and of the forces making for war, I had gone forward on the only path that seemed to me right. Therefore, the real burden of responsibility was mine. It was probably for this reason that Lord Northcliffe addressed me first and said very gravely:

"I have trustworthy information that the Government are going to 'rat.' We have hitherto taken a strong line in favour of intervention by the side of France and Russia. But, if the Government give way, what do you think we should do?"

"We have no choice," I answered. "If the Government 'rat' we must pull off our wigs and go bald-headed against the Government."

"Would you attack the Government at a moment of national crisis?" asked Lord Northcliffe.

"Certainly," I replied. "Suppose we wobble with the Government. The Germans will be in Belgium and in France

in a day or two and, discouraged by our defection, the French may not be able to withstand them. Paris may fall in a fortnight, unless the French make terms with the Germans and join them against us, as we should deserve to see them do. If we attack the Government we may either compel them to stand firm, or bring about the formation of a national Government that will do its duty before it is too late. Even if we do not succeed, we shall have preserved the dignity of *The Times* as a national institution and our influence will be doubled when, as is sure to happen, events compel us to make war in self-defence. There is really no alternative to a continuation of our policy."

Lord Northcliffe then asked the opinion of the representative of his other newspaper, who said simply:

"Attack the Government in a moment of national crisis? Impossible! The country would never forgive us."

Turning then to the prominent member of the staff of *The Times*, Lord Northcliffe asked his opinion.

"We ought not to be in a hurry," he answered. "There is much to be said in support of both of the views that have been expressed. But we do not appear until Monday morning. Between now and to-morrow night much may happen. I think we should adjourn until to-morrow afternoon."

Lord Northcliffe was about to speak when his telephone bell rang. His face changed as he listened. When he had hung up the receiver, he said, "I am summoned urgently to see some important people. We will meet again to-morrow."

Subsequently, Lord Northcliffe told me that the important people whom he had been urgently asked to meet were the financial magnate who had attempted to silence *The Times* on the Friday, and that magnate's younger brother. He had been told on the telephone that they had news of the utmost gravity to communicate. When he met them, they assured him that they had received such information of the overwhelming military and naval strength of Germany that, if England went to war, "the British Empire would be swept off the face of the earth in a few weeks." Therefore they implored him to use his influence to keep England neutral. They had made

similar representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lloyd George, who appreciated the gravity of the situation. If Lord Northcliffe would set his face earnestly in favour of neutrality, all might yet be saved.

How Lord Northcliffe treated them he did not tell me; but I gathered from another quarter that their interview with him was very brief indeed.

A WRETCHED NIGHT

I left *The Times* office that afternoon feeling more miserable than I had ever felt before or have ever felt since. I had no reason to suppose that Lord Northcliffe was wavering, but it was clear that strong influence would be put upon him to make him take at least a middle course. I did not then know him as well as I came to know him afterwards, when I found him remarkably steadfast under short-sighted or unpatriotic pressure. But I felt that, should the British Government favour a policy of neutrality, and should *The Times* not come out strongly against it, I could not remain on the staff of *The Times* or, perhaps, even in England.

In the early evening came the news of the German declaration of war upon Russia. The Russian Ambassador, Count Benckendorff, might, I thought, be able to throw some light on the attitude of the British Government. I telephoned to him and he asked me to come to the Embassy. From nine to eleven I sat with him there discussing the outlook from every angle. My first question was whether he or his Government had received, directly or indirectly, any hint of what England would do.

"We have not been able to get the faintest indication of your Government's attitude," he said, "not as much as *that*," and he snapped his fingers with an expressive gesture. "Sazonof [the Russian Foreign Minister] keeps telegraphing to me every few hours instructing me to beg Sir Edward Grey for some assurance of support, but Grey will not say a word or give any clue whatever to his thoughts. At St. Petersburg, poor Buchanan [the British Ambassador] is sitting in his

Embassy while fifty thousand Russians are singing 'Rule, Britannia' outside, and he knows no more than I do. What a position! No, I have got nothing, nothing — except a feeling, at the bottom of my heart, that Grey is straight. That is not much, but it is something."

With this meagre comfort I spent a wretched night. Not until next evening, Sunday, August 2nd, did the Government decide to act. Sir Edward Grey was then staying with Lord Haldane at the latter's house in Queen Anne's Gate. After dinner, a despatch came saying that the Germans were likely to invade Belgium. Grey and Haldane agreed that immediate action was necessary. They went together to the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, who sanctioned Lord Haldane's proposal that the British Expeditionary Force should be mobilized next morning. The mobilization orders were, in fact, given at 11 A.M. on Monday, August 3rd. As in the case of the Fleet, sundry precautionary measures had already been taken, and the arrangements worked very smoothly.

For some days the German intelligence system in England had been busy. Its agents had collected much valuable information; but, thanks to the nous and pluck of a British postal official, their efforts were paralysed. On Sunday, August 2nd, a number of postal officials who knew German were on duty at a Post Office where the mails for Germany were usually made up. One of them noticed that many letters from different parts of the country were addressed to Charlottenburg, a suburb of Berlin. Without instructions and in defiance of regulations he opened and detained them all. They contained information for the German General Staff. Thus, thanks to the courage of this man, who knew that he might be rendering himself liable to dismissal and severe punishment, this information was not only withheld from Germany, but the British authorities, who shrewdly allowed the German spies to continue their operations up to and after the actual outbreak of war, were able to lay their hands upon them and to dislocate at the critical moment, the German espionage system in Great Britain.

Towards midday on Sunday, August 2nd, I called upon M. Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador. Like his colleague,

Count Benckendorff, he was utterly ignorant of the British Government's intentions. When I spoke to him of the violation of the neutrality of Luxemburg, which had been announced that morning, he pointed to a copy of the Luxemburg Treaty by which the signatory Powers guaranteed the neutrality of the Grand Duchy (jointly but not severally) and exclaimed, bitterly:

"There is the signature of England. I have asked Grey whether England means to respect it."

"What did he say?"

"Nothing, nothing. I do not even know whether this evening the word 'honour' will not have to be struck out of the British vocabulary."

On December 21, 1920, when M. Paul Cambon had closed his long and distinguished career as Ambassador in London by presenting his letters of recall, I reminded him of this conversation.

"Did I say that?" asked M. Cambon quickly. "It was a very stiff thing to say."

"Yes, M. l'Ambassadeur, you said it and I, though an Englishman, took no offence at it, for it was a very 'stiff' situation and your responsibility was terrific."

"Ah!" he continued. "Those were the only three days of real difficulty in all the years I have spent in London — the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of August, 1914. Think what they meant. Your Cabinet had been discussing the European crisis repeatedly. We had relied on the support of three or four ministers. Some ministers, but not all, had been influenced by weighty representations from important men in the City in favour of British neutrality. On the morning of Saturday, August 1st, there had been another Cabinet meeting. Afterwards, I saw Grey, who told me that the Government had not been able to decide upon intervention in the war. He spoke very gravely. I replied that I could not and would not tell my Government that. 'After all that has passed between our two countries,' I exclaimed, 'after the withdrawal of our forces ten kilometres within our frontier so that German patrols can actually move on our soil without hindrance, so anxious

are we to avoid any appearance of provocation; after the agreement between your naval authorities and ours by which all our naval strength has been concentrated in the Mediterranean so as to release your Fleet for concentration in the North Sea, with the result that if the German Fleet now sweeps down the Channel and destroys Calais, Boulogne and Cherbourg, we can offer no resistance, you tell me that your Government cannot decide upon intervention? How am I to send such a message? It would fill France with rage and indignation. My people would say you have betrayed us. It is not possible. I cannot send such a message. It is true the agreements between your military and naval authorities and ours have not been ratified by our Governments, but you are under a moral obligation not to leave us unprotected.'

"I saw Grey again that night and again next morning after the Cabinet meeting, but not until the evening of Sunday, August 2nd, did Mr. Asquith inform me of the impending British mobilization or was I given the assurance that the British Fleet would protect our unguarded northern coast. I felt that Grey had been with us at heart. I knew that Mr. Asquith and Mr. Winston Churchill were with us, too. But could they carry with them their colleagues, and could they command the support of the House of Commons?"

"You will remember the King's reply to President Poincaré's letter of July 31st, M. l'Ambassadeur," I interrupted, "with its 'correct' but discouraging assurance that 'My Government will continue to discuss freely and frankly any point which might arise of interest to our two nations with M. Cambon,' prefaced by the statement that 'as to the attitude of my country, events are changing so rapidly that it is difficult to forecast future developments'? I have heard it whispered that the King afterwards called it 'my wretched letter.' He must have felt it hard to write so guardedly at such a moment."

"How could His Majesty go beyond his Government?" replied M. Cambon. "He is the most constitutional of sovereigns, not only formally but on principle. Like his chief ministers, and like Mr. Balfour and Lord Curzon among the

Opposition leaders, he was with us at heart, and showed it as soon as he could do so constitutionally. But it was not until Grey spoke in the House of Commons on the afternoon of Monday, August 3rd, that we could really breathe."

"But surely, M. l'Ambassadeur, the Government already knew of the German ultimatum to Belgium and had resolved on war? The decision must have been taken at the Cabinet meeting on Sunday, August 2nd?"

"They may or may not have known of the ultimatum," answered M. Cambon, "but they did not know of the invasion of Belgium. Besides, powerful influences were still at work for neutrality. The late Lord Rothschild told me that he was called to No. 10 Downing Street while the Cabinet was sitting on the morning of the 2nd. He told me afterwards that he had worked for intervention, but I was not quite reassured."

"Some people think you were right in not feeling reassured," I said.

THE EFFORTS OF HERR BALLIN

On reaching *The Times* office early in the afternoon of August 2nd the news was less disturbing. The Cabinet had met in the morning. According to the information then available, the proceedings had been grave but decisive. A strong section of the Cabinet had favoured neutrality, but Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Lord Haldane, Mr. Herbert Samuel and Mr. Winston Churchill, were determined to respect, at all costs, the British Treaty obligation to uphold the neutrality of Belgium, and the bulk of their colleagues had finally sided with them. Even Mr. Lloyd George (who, in some Radical quarters, had been expected to resign office and to join the Labour leader, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and others, in forming a "Stop the War!" party) supported the majority. Lord Morley, Mr. John Burns and Mr. Charles Trevelyan alone carried their conscientious objections to the point of resignation.

The editorial conference at *The Times* office that afternoon was memorable. Lord Northcliffe again presided. Mr. John

Walter, the second largest proprietor, was also present. A few weeks earlier he had attended the Kiel Regatta as the guest of Herr Ballin, the famous head of the German Hamburg-Amerika line, who was currently known in Germany as the Emperor's "Ocean Jew." Mr. Walter produced a message he had received at midday from Herr Ballin through Count Wengersky, the manager of the Hamburg-Amerika office in London. It was typewritten in doubtful English on Hamburg-Amerika paper. Mr. Walter explained that he had given Count Wengersky to understand that a message of this importance, sent by Herr Ballin, practically on behalf of the German Emperor, would be published in *The Times;* and he thought it should be published. He handed me the message, which ran as follows:

I hear with astonishment that, in France and elsewhere in the world, it is imagined that Germany wants to carry on an aggressive war, and that she has with this aim brought about the present situation. It is said that the Emperor was of the opinion that the moment had come to have a final reckoning with His enemies; but what a terrible error that is! Whoever knows the Emperor as I do, whoever knows how very seriously He takes the responsibility of the Crown, how His moral ideas are rooted in true religious feeling, must be astonished that any one could attribute such motives to Him.

He has not wanted the war; it has been forced upon Him by the might of the circumstances. He has worked unswervingly to keep the peace, and has together with England thrown His whole influence into the scales to find a peaceful solution in order to save His people from the horrors of war. But everything has been wrecked upon the attitude of Russia, which in the middle of negotiations which offered good outlook of success, mobilized her forces, wherewith she proved that she did not mean in earnest what her assurances of peaceful intentions indicated.

Now Germany's frontiers are menaced by Russia which drags her Allies into the war, now Germany's honour is at stake. Is it possible under these circumstances that the most peace-loving monarch can do otherwise than take to the sword in order to defend the most sacred interests of the nation?

And, finally, the German people! In them is firmly rooted the word of Prince Bismarck against aggressive wars. "One must not try to look into the cards of Fate."

It must be stated again; Russia alone forces the war upon Europe. Russia alone must carry the full weight of responsibility.

After reading this effusion to the conference I spoke strongly against its publication. Ballin had come to England towards July 20th and had seen Sir Edward Grey, Lord Haldane and Mr. Winston Churchill. It was suspected at the time, though not positively known, that he had, at least, a semi-official mission from the German Emperor or the German Foreign Office — a suspicion which Huldermann's "Biography of Ballin" was presently to confirm. Apparently, he was still ignorant of German official designs. Indeed, he afterwards showed, or affected, bitterness at the way in which he had been used as a tool. Though I had never met Ballin, I knew enough of his relations with the German Emperor and with the German Foreign Office to be convinced that he was merely an agent of the German Government and that it would be unwise and unfair to the British public, and to Sir Edward Grey, to publish his message on the morning of Monday, August 3rd. On the Monday afternoon Sir Edward Grey was to announce the impending outbreak of war to the House of Commons, and it was by no means certain how far he could carry Parliament with him. It seemed, therefore, highly impolitic to allow Herr Ballin to go bail in *The Times* for the pious intentions of the German Emperor whose troops might, at the very moment of publication, be making war on France or invading Belgium.

Lord Northcliffe and the editor agreed with these views, and I put Herr Ballin's message in my pocket. But, towards midnight on Monday, August 3rd, a telegraph messenger brought me a closed telegram addressed, "Wolff Bureau, London *Times*." The Wolff Bureau was the official German telegraph agency. Though we were not yet at war, Sir Edward Grey's speech in the House of Commons that afternoon had made it clear that war was merely a question of hours. Therefore, without compunction, I opened the telegram. It was dated Berlin, August 2nd, but had been delayed in transmis-

sion, and it was evidently intended for the London representative of the Wolff Bureau. It ran, in German:

WOLFF BUREAU
London *Times* bringt Erklaerung Ballins zur Lage. Bitte woertlich telegraphieren

WOLFF BUREAU.

Literally:

WOLFF BUREAU
London *Times* is publishing statement by Ballin on the situation. Please telegraph it verbatim.

Obviously the receiving office in London had taken the beginning of the text for the end of the address and, imagining the Wolff Bureau to be in *The Times* office, had sent it to us. I had the telegram copied; wrote on the original, in German, "*The Times* is publishing no statement by Ballin"; replaced it in the envelope and told the messenger that it should be delivered at the office of the Wolff Bureau.

By a lucky accident we were thus in possession of proof that Herr Ballin had either informed the German official telegraph agency of what he had done, or that the sending of his message had been prompted by the German Government, if not by the Emperor himself; and that, had it been published in *The Times*, it was to have been telegraphed back to Germany with the added authority derived from its publication in the leading English newspaper. In short, Herr Ballin's manœuvre was revealed as an attempt to trade upon the good faith of Mr. Walter for the purpose of using the influence of *The Times* in England, and the authority of its name abroad, to mislead the British and the German public.

Yet, by the afternoon of August 4th, before England declared war, the German Imperial Chancellor had ceased to pretend that the Emperor's "moral ideas are rooted in true religious feeling" or that he had "together with England thrown his whole influence into the scales to find a peaceful solution." On that day he declared to the Reichstag:

Gentlemen, we are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law! Our troops have occupied Luxemburg and perhaps

[as a matter of fact the speaker knew that Belgium had been invaded that morning] are already on Belgian soil. Gentlemen, that is contrary to the dictates of international law. It is true that the French Government has declared at Brussels that France is willing to respect the neutrality of Belgium as long as her opponent respects it. We knew, however, that France stood ready for the invasion. France could wait, but we could not wait. A French movement on our flank upon the lower Rhine might have been disastrous. So we were compelled to override the just protest of the Luxemburg and Belgian Governments. The wrong—I speak openly — that we are committing we will endeavour to make good as soon as our military goal has been reached. Anybody who is threatened, as we are threatened, and is fighting for his highest possessions can have only one thought — how he is to hack his way through [wie er sich durchhaut].

THE EXPOSURE OF HERR BALLIN

Owing to the interruption of communications by the outbreak of war, the German text of the Chancellor's speech did not reach London until August 11th. On August 12th *The Times* published it, together with Herr Ballin's message to Mr. Walter, but without naming either the sender or the recipient of the message. It said only that the message " bore the name of a personage holding a prominent position in Germany and standing in a close personal relationship to the German Emperor "; and that " it was evidently timed for publication on the morning of August 3rd, the day of Sir Edward Grey's historic speech in the House of Commons."

For nine months nothing more was heard of the matter. But in April, 1915, the New York *World* received from its special correspondent in Germany, Mr. von Wiegand, an account of an interview with Herr Ballin in which Herr Ballin quoted an assurance given him personally by the Emperor, " I never desired this war. Every act of mine in the twenty-six years of my government proves that I did not want to bring about this, or any other, war "; and added, in reply to the correspondent's question " whom the Emperor thought responsible for the war? ":

We all feel that this war has been brought about by England. We honestly believe that Sir Edward Grey could have stopped it. If,

on the first day, he had declared that "England refuses to go into war because of the internal questions between Serbia and Austria," then Russia and France would have found a way to compromise with Austria. If, on the other hand, Sir Edward Grey had said that England was ready to go to war, then, for the sake of Germany, probably Austria might have been more ready to compromise. But, by leaving his attitude uncertain and letting us understand that he was not bound to go to war, Sir Edward Grey certainly brought about the war. If he had decided at once, one way or the other, Sir Edward Grey could have avoided this terrible thing.

An account of this "interview" was published in *The Times* on April 15, 1915. To it *The Times* appended Herr Ballin's message of August 2, 1914, and stated that he was the author of it. It thus appeared that, on August 2, 1914, for British consumption and in the name of the German Emperor, Herr Ballin had thrown the whole blame of the war upon Russia; whereas, for American consumption, nine months later, he threw it on Sir Edward Grey.

After commenting upon this illuminating performance, *The Times* wrote:

Herr Ballin might render the world a service if he would frankly and truthfully state whether the German Emperor did or did not, on or before July 14th last, make to the Emperor Francis Joseph a communication so encouraging, and containing assurances of support so unqualified that the Austro-Hungarian monarch was thereby induced to assent to the ultimatum of July 23rd, by which Austria prepared her attack on Serbia. We know, on the authority of Professor Hans Delbrück's article in the *Atlantic Monthly* of February, that, in the ultimatum, Austria demanded "conditions which would have placed Serbia under her permanent control; and that Count Berchtold, by writing his Note [to Serbia] in terms as incisive as possible, placed the Tsar before the immediate alternative of war or peace." But was not the presentation of this "incisive Note," or ultimatum, a direct result of the German Emperor's communication to the Emperor Francis Joseph which, we have reason to believe, was read by influential friends of the German Emperor before being despatched? Herr Ballin could doubtless tell us these things, and much besides — but then he might find it hard to prove the guilt of Sir Edward Grey who continued to strive for peace until the German refusal to respect the neutrality of Belgium obliged him to appeal to the arbitrament of war.

This was too much for Herr Ballin. Three days later, one of the German semi-official organs, the *Kölnische Zeitung*, quoted this article from *The Times* as a preface to a telegram from Hamburg which had obviously been sent by Herr Ballin himself. The telegram ran:

> The intention of *The Times* is to strike at our Emperor by repeating pretended utterances on the part of Herr Ballin, for *The Times* says repeatedly that Herr Ballin then, as to-day, spoke in the Kaiser's name. But it has no luck with this new piece of villany. As a proof of the art of unscrupulous distortion as practised by *The Times*, we publish below a complete translation of the letter which Herr Ballin addressed on August 1, 1914, to the publisher of *The Times*, Mr. Walter, who was Herr Ballin's guest last summer during the Kiel week.
>
> No man of sound mind can discover in this letter the imputations of *The Times* either as to the utterances of Herr Ballin in the name of the Emperor or the utterance about Russia falsely attributed to him and even quoted verbatim by *The Times*. But *The Times* seems to think its readers will stand anything.

The letter which the *Kölnische Zeitung* published as having been written by Herr Ballin to Mr. Walter on August 1st, was an answer to a letter of thanks for pleasant days passed at Kiel. It contained not a word about the responsibility of Russia but, after alluding to the possibility of war, said that Herr Ballin would be grateful if room could be found in *The Times* for his view that war, if it came, would be a war of defence on the part of Germany, since all the efforts of the Emperor and of the Chancellor were directed towards the maintenance of peaceful and friendly relations with foreign countries. The letter added:

> Everyone who knows the German Emperor will share my opinion that it most grossly contradicts his religious views to draw the sword unless it be for the honour and welfare of his people, and that the thought of a preventive war is inconceivable for a man of his views.

Herr Ballin's telegram to the *Kölnische Zeitung* together with the full text of his alleged letter to Mr. John Walter were reproduced, on April 19, 1915, in *The Times*, which could only profess entire ignorance of the letter and asseverate that Mr.

Walter had never received it. The position was difficult — all the more because I had not kept even the original typescript of Count Wengersky's communication to Mr. Walter. It had gone to the printer on August 11, 1914, and, like most old "copy," had been destroyed at the end of six months. Therefore we had not a scrap of evidence to support our assertions, nor any means of disproving Herr Ballin's charge that we had forged his message.

THE HAND OF CHANCE

Two days later, an unknown man called at *The Times* office. When I saw him, he produced the original of a telegram sent in German by Herr Ballin from Hamburg at 11:20 P.M. on August 1, 1914. It was addressed to Count Wengersky and bore the receiving stamp of the West Strand Post Office in London at 5 A.M. on August 2nd, 1914, and began:

> Translate the following article into English and call with the translation on Mr. Walter, the publisher of *The Times*, bring him my best greetings and ask him to publish it in *The Times* of Monday. In case Walter refuses you must cause the article to be published prominently in another first-class newspaper. Report to me telegraphically in German as telegrams in foreign languages are not now forwarded in Germany. War has not yet been declared and there is still some hope. The letter for Walter which Knuth was to have carried is thus replaced by the present telegram and the letter for Lord Haldane I am sending direct by post, so that Knuth will not start.

The text of the "article" which followed, corresponded, word for word, to the text of the message which Count Wengersky had delivered to Mr. Walter on August 2nd, except that, in his translation, Count Wengersky had suppressed a phrase, "No one but Russia wanted the war," at the end of the "article."

Thus it was proved that not only had Herr Ballin not sent his letter of August 1st to Mr. Walter, but that he had replaced it by a telegraphed "article" casting the whole blame on Russia; and that he had subsequently denied the authenticity of, and accused *The Times* of having forged, his "ar-

ticle " when it suited him, or the German Emperor, to pretend that Sir Edward Grey was responsible for the war.

On April 23rd, 1915, *The Times* published an account of the incident together with a facsimile of Herr Ballin's original telegram to Count Wengersky; and thereafter Herr Ballin held his peace.

But the story told by the man who brought the telegram to *The Times* office was a romance by itself. It appeared that he had been employed in the Hamburg-Amerika office; and that when, after the outbreak of war, the British Admiralty examined the Hamburg-Amerika papers in London, a large number of unimportant documents were left littered about. He had collected these documents, made packets of them, taken them home and put them in the attic of his house. On the day when Herr Ballin's denial of the authenticity of his message and the text of his alleged letter to Mr. Walter were published in *The Times*, the man's wife happened to warn him that, if any of the packets in the attic were of value, he had better look after them, since the children had been playing with them. He went to the attic and found that the children had lit a fire in the grate with the contents of some of the packets, and that they had placed the packet containing Herr Ballin's telegram to Count Wengersky on the fire, but that its weight had extinguished the flames. On opening the packet he had discovered the telegram which, in view of the interest caused by Herr Ballin's denial, he brought to *The Times*. Obviously, the Providence that watches over children and drunkards watches also over honest newspapers.

AN EPILOGUE

A fortnight later, on May 6, 1915, Herr Ballin's performances were debated in the House of Lords, where Lord Hylton recapitulated the facts, drew attention to the accusations against Sir Edward Grey, alluded to the abominable treatment of British wounded and British prisoners in Germany as an indelible strain upon the honour of the German Army, and added:

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I think this story of Herr Ballin will reflect in an almost equal degree on the fair fame and on the honour of German diplomacy. I do not know whether the Government will think proper to order the printing and the distribution in neutral countries of copies of *The Times* article of April 23rd, but I think it might be an advantage if some course of that kind were taken. . . . I am not at all sure that the anti-English press campaign of Germany has not been propagated even in this country. I received this morning a publication called *Peace and War*, and it contains an article on "The Affaire Ballin"; six straight questions to *The Times*. The article, on the face of it, might certainly have been written by one of Herr Ballin's representatives in this country. . . . I do not know who is the proprietor or the editor of *Peace and War*, but I observe it contains only one advertisement, and immediately below the article. The advertisement is one of "a delicious chocolate on sale everywhere."

In conclusion, Lord Hylton asked Lord Haldane whether he had ever received the letter from Herr Ballin that was mentioned in the original of the telegram to Count Wengersky. Lord Haldane answered:

The Times has completely vindicated itself because it is clear that, in the memorandum which has now come to light, Herr Ballin did make the point, and made it very strongly, that Russia was the Power to blame for this war. . . . All one can say is that Herr Ballin has been very unfortunate. I find it difficult to bring myself to believe that there has not been some lapse of memory, some treachery of recollection in his handling of this matter, because the close proximity of the two documents and the divergence of view is a divergence which cannot otherwise be explained without making a great reflection on his sincerity. . . . The letter to which he referred was written to me after his return to Germany. . . . There was nothing which remotely resembled the accusation against Russia which was contained in the memorandum. It is a letter which adds nothing to the matter on which *The Times* comments. It was a private communication written to me after Herr Ballin had dined with me in London.

THE SPEECH OF SIR EDWARD GREY

The prompt action of the pacifist publication, *Peace and War*, in taking up the cudgels for Herr Ballin, was an early

instance of the remarkable celerity with which British pacifists managed, throughout the war, by spontaneous sympathy or otherwise, to keep in touch with German propaganda; a careful study of this interesting phenomenon would establish some striking "coincidences." Their attacks on Sir Edward Grey, whom they sought to saddle with the responsibility for the war, were constant and venomous. Nothing has ever come to light, or can come to light, to substantiate against Sir Edward Grey any other charge than that of having been so utterly devoted to the cause of peace that he did not sufficiently warn the country of the danger of war. Even after he had told the German Ambassador on July 29th that, if war came, it would not be possible for Germany to depend upon British neutrality, he refrained from giving the slightest encouragement to the French or to the Russian ambassadors to expect a British departure from neutrality. Nor is it possible to read his great speech of August 3, 1914, without feeling that it was the utterance of a man whom a high sense of honour had forced into war, not only against his wish but against his desperate endeavour. Knowing, as I knew, that he had disapproved of the leading articles in *The Times* during the crisis lest they disturb the peaceful atmosphere he was striving to maintain, it hardly needed the experience which I had at the Foreign Office on the afternoon of August 3rd to convince me, without documentary evidence, how little he and his helpers had desired a conflict.

Sir Edward Grey began his speech in the House of Commons towards 3 o'clock. At that hour I called upon Sir Arthur Nicolson (afterwards Lord Carnock), Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, and one of the most distinguished of British diplomatists. He asked me how I thought "it would go."

"If you mean Grey's speech," I answered, "it will go excellently. He has only to tell the truth and he will have the House and the country with him."

"I wish I felt as sure as you," Sir Arthur Nicolson replied. "There is a good deal of active opposition and the crisis has

come so rapidly that the country does not know what it is all about."

We discussed the situation until a secretary came into the room with a strip of paper torn from the tape machine.

"They have cheered him, sir," he said.

"Thank goodness!" ejaculated Sir Arthur, in a tone of intense relief.

Soon after 4 o'clock, Lord Onslow, Sir Arthur Nicolson's private secretary, burst into the room. He had come straight from the House of Commons.

"He has had a tremendous success, sir," he said. "The whole House was with him."

Sir Arthur Nicolson sank back in his chair in the attitude of a man from whose shoulders a crushing burden of anxiety had been lifted.

"Thank God!" he said fervently. "Now the course is clear, but it will be a terrible business."

Such was the "bellicose" spirit in the British Foreign Office on the eve of war. If Sir Edward Grey or the Government made mistakes, they were certainly not the mistakes of men who looked upon the prospect of war otherwise than with horror. The very caution with which Sir Edward Grey developed his thesis in the House of Commons, feeling his way step by step; making it clear that, though the fleet had been mobilized and the army was being mobilized, England was still committed to nothing more than to defend the coasts and shipping of France should Germany attack them; and dealing hypothetically with British obligations to uphold Belgian neutrality — for he had, at that moment, no official knowledge of the German ultimatum to Belgium and had only received when on his way to the House of Commons King Albert's appeal to King George for "diplomatic help" — showed how careful he was, even then, to say no harsh word and not to precipitate disaster. Not until later that afternoon did he receive official news of the German ultimatum to Belgium or of the Belgian reply that an attack on Belgian neutrality would be a flagrant violation of the law of nations which Belgium was firmly resolved to repel by all possible

means; and, in giving this news to the House of Commons, Sir Edward Grey merely added, "I can only say that His Majesty's Government must take into grave consideration the information which they have received." But that night he told the Belgian Minister in London that, if the neutrality of Belgium were violated, England would make war upon Germany, and he caused the following telegram to be sent next morning to the British Minister in Brussels:

> You should inform Belgian Government that if pressure is applied to them by Germany to induce them to depart from neutrality, His Majesty's Government expect that they will resist by any means in their power, and that His Majesty's Government will support them in offering such resistance, and that His Majesty's Government in this event are prepared to join Russia and France, if desired, in offering to the Belgian Government at once common action for the purpose of resisting use of force by Germany against them, and a guarantee to maintain their independence and integrity in future years.

THE "SCRAP OF PAPER"

The history of those hours and days is too well known to need recapitulation. Hostilities had already begun in several parts of Europe. The Austrians had bombarded Belgrade on July 29th; Sir Edward Grey had rejected, on July 30th, the proposal of the German Chancellor that "if England would stand aside, Germany would not annex French territory other than French colonies," by saying that "it would be a disgrace for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country could never recover." On July 31st, the Belgian mobilization had been ordered, despite the efforts of a German Socialist mission which was sent to Brussels in the hope of persuading the Belgian Socialists to proclaim a general strike; and, on the same day, general mobilization had been proclaimed in Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Germany. On August 2nd, the main British Fleet had assembled at Scapa Flow; and, while seven German armies were formed in the west, the Germans invaded Russian Poland and Russian troops

entered East Prussia. On that day also, though it was then only suspected, not known, Turkey signed an offensive and defensive Treaty with Germany at Constantinople, just as, on August 4th, Bulgaria was to sign a similar treaty with Germany and Austria-Hungary. On August 3rd, Germany declared war on France who had withdrawn her troops ten kilometres inside the French frontier in the hope of avoiding frontier incidents, and Lunéville was bombed by German aëroplanes. On August 4th, the German troops in Belgium set fire to Visé and began the attack on Liége while, in the Reichstag, the German Socialists voted the first £250,000,000 war credit. On that morning Sir Edward Grey instructed Sir Edward Goschen, the British Ambassador in Berlin, to ask for his passports unless a German assurance were received in London by midnight that Belgian neutrality would be respected, France having given the assurance on July 31st. After an interview, towards 7 P.M., with the German Foreign Secretary, Herr von Jagow, who held out no prospect that the assurance would be given, Sir Edward Goschen asked for his passports; and, later in the evening, had a final interview with the Imperial Chancellor, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg.

When Sir Edward Goschen's memorable despatch describing this interview with the German Imperial Chancellor was presently published, I felt glad that the world should at last be enabled to appreciate the British Ambassador's sterling qualities. As a diplomatist Sir Edward Goschen had not been accounted especially eminent. The easy-going goodfellowship that marked his official and social relationships hid from superficial observers the iron in his character. He was always at his best in a tight place, as his handling of Aehrenthal at the beginning of the Bosnian annexation crisis had shown. King Edward respected him highly and trusted his judgment. But his place in history is assured among the great representatives of England by his treatment of Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg in the interview of August 4th. His account of it has often been quoted, but it will bear quotation again.

I found the Chancellor very agitated. His Excellency at once began a harangue, which lasted for about twenty minutes. He said that the step taken by His Majesty's [the British] Government was terrible to a degree. Just for a word — "neutrality," a word which in war time had so often been disregarded — just for a scrap of paper, Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her. . . . He held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events that might happen. I protested strongly against that statement, and said that, in the same way as he and Herr von Jagow wished me to understand that, for strategic reasons, it was a matter of life and death to Germany to advance through Belgium and violate the latter's neutrality, so I would wish him to understand that it was, so to speak, a matter of "life and death" for the honour of Great Britain that she should keep her engagement to do her utmost to defend Belgium's neutrality if attacked. That solemn compact simply had to be kept, or what confidence could anyone have in engagements given by Great Britain in the future? The Chancellor said, "But at what a price will that compact have been kept. Has the British Government thought of that?" I hinted to his Excellency as plainly as I could that fear of consequences could hardly be regarded as an excuse for breaking solemn engagements, but His Excellency was so excited, so evidently overcome at the news of our action and so little disposed to hear reason, that I refrained from adding fuel to the flame by further argument.

Sir Edward Goschen's despatch will stand as one of the proudest documents in British history. On the evening of August 4th, a Berlin crowd made an angry demonstration against the British Embassy and stones were thrown at the windows. Next morning the Emperor sent one of his aides-de-camp to Sir Edward Goschen to express regret for these occurrences but to say that, at the same time, the Ambassador would gather from them an idea of the feelings of the German people. The aide-de-camp added, "His Majesty also begs that you will tell the King that he has been proud of the titles of British Field Marshal and British Admiral, but that, in consequence of what has occurred, he must now at once divest himself of those titles." In reporting this message, Sir Edward Goschen wrote, "I would add that the above message lost none of its acerbity by the manner of its delivery."

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THE BRITISH EMPIRE AT WAR

A small group of journalists waited at the Foreign Office in London on the night of August 4th. The German attack upon Liége was not yet known; and some of them hoped against hope that, at the last moment, Germany might promise to respect Belgian neutrality. I had no such hope. Since August, 1908, I had believed that, when Germany made war, her forces would pass through Belgium. Within a few minutes of midnight it was announced that Germany had finally decided to ignore the British request, and that peace was at an end. Few then realized what the war would mean. The Oversea Dominions were already rallying round the Mother Country — Canada had offered help on August 1st and Australia had offered 20,000 men on August 3rd — and people were confident of the outcome of the struggle. But they were so unaccustomed to think in terms of a Continental war that their minds could not grasp the immensity or the intensity of the conflict to which they were committed.

This was as true of most members of the Government as of the people at large. Upon their duty to fight for Belgian neutrality and for the safety of the Narrow Seas they were, by this time, practically unanimous. But, had they been told, in August, 1914, that the war would last four years and three months; that it would cost Great Britain £8,000,000,000; that, before it was over, 7,630,000 white men would be enrolled in the British Armies and Navy; that more than 9,000,000 tons of British merchant shipping would be lost, and that the British contribution to the Allied death roll would be 846,023, while 2,121,000 would be wounded, they would have been appalled. They would not have quailed or flinched; for even then, the obscure instinct which is the determining element in British minds, warned them dimly that the freedom of their country and its very existence were at stake. But, for some time, they thought, consciously and conscientiously, that they were fighting chiefly for Belgium in the first place and for France in the second. Not until the war had been long in progress did the British people fully

realize that it was their own security as much as that of others which they were defending. But at no time during the war did the feeling that they were fighting against a dangerous commercial rival seriously sway the minds of Englishmen. Had they been asked to suffer what they suffered, to pay what they paid and to dare as they dared for any merely economic reason, they would have revolted against so mean an assessment of their ideals. Most Englishmen are vaguely, and many are intensely, religious in temperament. They need to believe in something. It is generally something that appeals to their sense of what is right. In August, 1914, they held it right to fight in support of their country's word to Belgium and, secondarily, in support of their friends. That was all.

The actual military and naval commitments of the British Government were not then such as to foreshadow the exhaustion of the nation's resources. The navy was thought adequate to ward off attacks by the German Fleet and to defeat it, should it risk a general engagement. Under the provisional arrangements made with France against the contingency of British intervention in a Continental war, a maximum expeditionary force of six divisions, roughly 120,000 men, was contemplated. These divisions were of superlative quality, composed mainly of veterans of the war in South Africa and highly trained in the light of the lessons learned there. Not only was their physique good, but they could march and, above all, they could shoot straight. The French had been warned not to expect more than four divisions at first; and the French Ambassador in London, M. Paul Cambon, had told General Foch that in no case would it be prudent to reckon upon the arrival of any British forces in France until fifteen days after an eventual German attack. Nevertheless, the first British troops landed at Boulogne on August 5th, the day after the British declaration of war, and the rest of the four divisions followed rapidly. But a shock to British expectations of a comparatively short and successful struggle was given on August 7th, when Lord Kitchener (who had been appointed Secretary for War on August 5th) called for 100,000 volunteers

to engage themselves " for three years, or the duration of the war."

LORD NORTHCLIFFE'S VIEW

The appointment to the War Office of Lord Kitchener, who had actually been about to leave England at the beginning of August, was due in large measure to the public insistence of Lord Northcliffe that Kitchener should be placed in military charge of the war. Though the non-appointment of Lord Haldane was, in some respects, an injustice, inasmuch as he had worked devotedly to create a Territorial Army and to increase the efficiency of the Regular troops, there was no comparison between the confidence felt in him and that felt in Lord Kitchener. From the outset Lord Northcliffe was convinced that the war would be very protracted. " This is going to be a long, long war," he said to me on August 6th; and he held to his view against all arguments from people who were technically better qualified than he to form an opinion. My own estimate was utterly wrong. Even after the battle of the Marne, at the beginning of September, I thought the war might be over by the spring of 1915; and not until the end of 1916 did I believe that it was likely to last into 1918. But, in one respect, I was, from the first, in complete agreement with Lord Northcliffe. Throughout the war he had only one thought — how best to damage and defeat the enemy. He had, in eminent degree, what afterwards came to be called " the war mind." He had studied Germany carefully for many years; and though his knowledge of the intricacies of the European situation was inferior to that of some members of his staffs, he had long felt that the days of England would be numbered unless she were prepared to throw herself into the war, when it came, with all her strength. For this reason he had strongly supported Lord Roberts and Admiral Lord Fisher.

Before the war, I had seen comparatively little of Lord Northcliffe. In the niceties of my special work he was not greatly interested. But he shared my strong conviction that Germany was aiming at the mastery of Europe and of the

world, and that she would strike whenever she believed the moment propitious. I had been, so to speak, "in the war," since March 31, 1905, when the German Emperor visited Tangier; and very definitely "in it" since the Bosnian annexation crisis of 1908–09. Therefore, the actual coming of the war surprised me little, and I felt, if not with the same intensity as Lord Northcliffe, at least with equal pertinacity, that the only hope for England lay in the utter defeat of the enemy, by all means, on land and sea and in the air. This, I think, drew him to me and formed the basis of a personal friendship that lasted until his death in 1922. He thought I had passed the test which, after August, 1914, he applied to everyone who worked with him or with whom he had dealings, "Does he understand the war?"

It may be fairly maintained that, in August, 1914, nobody "understood the war" in all its complications, in the vastness of the issues it raised and in the incalculable consequences it was to entail. But Lord Northcliffe's question really meant that he divided men into two classes — those who felt that there could be no way out except through victory, and those who bewailed the loss of peace, or sought compromises, or failed to bend all their energies to the hitting of the enemy, constantly and hard, by arms and by policy. He had great failings as a man and even as a journalist, extremely able craftsman though he was; but none of those who worked intimately with him throughout the struggle, can honestly doubt that his overmastering passion was to help in securing the triumph of the Allied cause.

This quality enabled and, in a measure, entitled him to wield great influence. Whether he always wielded it wisely is a question on which opinions differed, and will differ, widely. Just as he was indifferent to the details of the negotiations that preceded hostilities, so he tended, later on, to be careless of the finer aspects of the making of peace. To the precise dates of the various mobilizations and to the controversy whether war might not have been avoided had this or that been done or left undone at the last moment, I too was indifferent; for I was persuaded that all these things were, on the

part of Germany and Austria-Hungary, mere manœuvres for position and preliminaries to the execution of designs long formed and matured. Indeed, the actual declaration of war by England filled me with a sense of relief. Once England was in the fray, I felt sure that she would see the thing through to the only conceivable end; and not until within a month of the signing of the Armistice in November, 1918, do I remember feeling any serious depression or doubt. Why doubt then came, and how it was justified, may appear from subsequent phases of my story.

CHAPTER XII

THE ISSUES
1914–1915

BY making war on Belgium, Germany helped to save the British Empire. Nothing, save a direct attack on England, could so have roused British feeling; and even a direct attack might not have appealed so potently to the national conscience. British security was certainly involved; but it is a peculiarity of the British temperament that the defence even of vital interests is never so whole-heartedly undertaken as when that defence is also felt to be a moral duty. Had Germany respected the pledge to Belgium, the British Government might have hesitated to make war until the German fleet threatened the coast of France — and then it might have been too late to save either France or England. In any case, the Government, and probably the nation, would have been divided. But once the Belgian issue was raised, there could be neither doubt nor delay.

A month earlier, few in England knew or cared much about Belgium. There was vague fear of trouble between Austria and Serbia, and intense interest in the impending civil war in Ireland; but, had the majority of Englishmen then been asked to define the engagements of their country towards Belgium, they would have been unable to answer. Though an obvious threat to the "Safety of the Narrow Seas" or to the "Balance of Power in Europe" might have disquieted them, they would scarcely have sprung to arms on behalf of the interests which those phrases connoted. A clear moral issue could alone inspire the unanimity of resolve which England felt and showed on August 4, 1914; and the supreme German blunder was to challenge her security in such a way as to make it right towards others that she should do her duty to herself.

Some saw, indeed, that behind the moral issue lay not only a question of life or death for England and the Empire but a struggle between two incompatible conceptions of civilization, between the Prusso-Napoleonic and the Christian, between the Militarist and the Liberal. Germany had become virtually pagan, worshipping a deity more nearly akin to Odin than to Christ. For many years I had revolted inwardly against the doctrines which had come to be her effective creed. Far better, I felt, that "England," that is to say, all the ideals of individual freedom and ordered political liberty that had gone out from England through the centuries, should perish in a fight to the death with the evil thing represented by Prussia and her prophets, Treitschke, Nietzsche, and Bernhardi, than that she should purchase a dubious respite by standing aside or seeking an impossible compromise with it. Hence the almost joyous relief with which I, like other ardent spirits, learned that the die was cast and the battle fairly joined.

But the practical problem which, in immediate importance, transcended all others, was how to bring a people, unprepared for a fight of this quality, unmilitary of mind and ignorant of European affairs, to grasp what was at stake and to throw its whole strength and wealth into the fray. On the Belgian issue, with which that of loyalty towards France and also towards Russia was speedily linked, the nation and the Empire were at one with the Government. Dissentients were so few as to be negligible. Even in Ireland a wave of generous emotion swept all before it; and had it met with a fuller response from some British and Ulster leaders, the course of events in Ireland might have been other. Eagerness to serve, of which the like had not been seen since the days of the Spanish Armada, united all classes; and, if the Government had risen to the height of its opportunity, it could have secured ready assent to the principle of compulsory national service. The question was, How best to serve? — a question which, in the absence of guidance from the Government, individuals had to answer for themselves. In my own case I decided reluctantly that my place was at home and my duty to stay at my post. I was in my forty-third year, without

military training but with a knowledge of European affairs and of the antecedents of the war which few of my fellow countrymen possessed in equal measure. I was, moreover, the only Englishman to whom chance had given a close working acquaintance with Austria-Hungary and with the part assigned to her in German schemes for the mastery of the world. From the outset, nay, even before the declaration of war, I was persuaded that Austria-Hungary would be the pivot of the struggle, and that, unless she were discomfited and transformed, if not dismembered, Germany could not be truly defeated. This persuasion I shared especially with my friend, Dr. R. W. Seton-Watson, a young Scottish historian who had studied Austro-Hungarian problems assiduously for a decade and who, like me, enjoyed the confidence of the principal leaders of the non-German and non-Magyar Hapsburg races. Though he had not had my advantage of continuous residence and daily work in the Hapsburg Monarchy, he knew it from end to end and, to some extent, in greater detail than I. But my decision to stay at home was influenced chiefly by the thought that I was responsible for framing the foreign policy of *The Times* and that, with the exception of military and naval matters, the whole range of the war would come within my province. Though the importance of what afterwards came to be called " the Home front " was not then adequately realized, the business of instructing public opinion at home seemed to me more urgent than that of carrying an inefficient rifle in the field or of seeking work under official auspices.

THE PEACE MIND AND THE WAR MIND

If the nation was united and steadfast, there was between members of the Government a subtle difference which presently became dangerous. A few who had long held war inevitable and went into it feeling that nothing mattered save the winning of it, found themselves hampered by the persistence of a peace habit of mind among their colleagues. Had it been possible from the beginning to put in charge of the war men unencumbered by regretful memories and prepared

to stake everything upon a prompt mobilization of all the national resources, scores of thousands of lives and hundreds of millions of money might well have been saved. It was not possible; and, for the first two years, policy continued to be influenced by men who had believed in and worked for peace, and who felt the war to be a dire and unmerited catastrophe. They had, in a word, "peace minds," and found it hard to transmute all their conceptions of policy and conduct into terms of war. Their moral strength was great, but they could not recover from the shock of seeing the world they had known, and had laboured to improve, suddenly turned into a bloody hell. And just as they lacked the intensity needful for the purpose of hitting the enemy everywhere by every means, on land and sea and in the air, by propaganda, by organization and by rapid provision of arms and munitions, so they underestimated the capacity of the British peoples for self-sacrifice. Otherwise they would not have hesitated to introduce conscription from the first nor would they have deferred the conversion of British industry into a definite part of the war machine. They relied upon the voluntary principle, not perceiving that it must operate unfairly to individuals and to the hurt of the nation as a whole. The men who volunteered for Kitchener's Armies were the flower of British manhood in physique and in brains. Few escaped death or disablement. They would have been invaluable as officers and leaders of a truly national army enrolled by law with stern impartiality. As it was, the best went first, and perished under an unjust and uneconomic lack of system glorified as voluntary effort. The price of that error England is paying to-day and will pay for many a decade. No other nation suffered in precisely the same way — but it was the price of the years of unreadiness and of the unwillingness of all classes to believe in the reality of danger.

THE MARNE

The invasion of Belgium, the burning of Louvain, the arrival in England of thousands of Belgian refugees fleeing from German "frightfulness"; the failure of the French General

Staff to defend the frontier of France west of Mézières and the consequent retreat of the French and British forces southwestwards after fighting of which the intensity and the gallantry were not surpassed during the whole war; the stand of Joffre's main army on the Marne while the German Commander, von Kluck, swerved to engage it and exposed his flank to the victorious thrusts of Generals Maunoury and Galliéni and of the British force under Sir John French, kept the British public breathless until the victory of the Marne turned the tide and warded off the most pressing peril. With those operations I am not competent to deal, nor does my knowledge of them exceed that of the average layman. Military historians are likely long to discuss the adoption by the French General Staff of the famous plan "Number 17" — which appears to have been based on an assumption that the Germans would not pass in strength through Belgium — and the various phases of the Marne battle or battles that decided, in reality, the course and character of the war. "You're lucky to know what happened on the Marne; what devilish clever fellows you historians are!" said General Joffre later on to a young officer who, having written an account of the battle, presented a copy of it to his Commander-in-Chief. The only contribution I can make to the story of the Marne is to suggest a reason for von Kluck's swerve to the southeast on September 4, 1914, when he appeared to have Paris at his mercy. It was given me in 1920 by an intelligent French military chaplain who had helped to bury the dead on the battlefield and had seen the orders and papers found on the bodies of German officers.

"Von Kluck's swerve," he said, "was inspired by pedantic fidelity to the principles of Clausewitz. German spies behind the French and British lines had informed German Headquarters that the British Expeditionary Force and Maunoury's Sixth Army were utterly broken. Consequently, von Kluck left them out of account and decided to smash Joffre's main army before taking Paris — in accordance with Clausewitz's doctrine that the enemy's strongest point must be the objective of a commander in the field. Therefore von Kluck

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issued an army order to the effect that the forces of Sir John French and of Maunoury were no longer to be feared, that the main French army to the east of Paris was to be destroyed on the morrow and that, after a day of rest for all arms, Paris was to be taken. But, while the Germans were swerving towards him, Joffre decided to take the offensive on September 6th; and with the help of the British, of Maunoury's Sixth Army and, later, of General Galliéni's "taxicab" army from Paris who cut into the German flank, he drove the enemy northwards while Foch thrust a wedge between the German forces farther east. Had von Kluck forgotten his Clausewitz, he might have taken Paris and have hit the Allies a blow from which they would hardly have had time to recover."

MASARYK ACTS

The Allied victory on the Marne was more than a military success. In destroying the legend of German invincibility it gave hope to the subject peoples of Central Europe, the Czechs and Slovaks, the Southern Slavs, the Transylvanian Rumanes, and the Austrian Poles. These peoples, technically enemy, were in reality supporters and well-wishers of the Allies; and in all Allied countries it became a question of distinguishing between them and enemy peoples proper. Very early in the war I was consulted by the Chief Commissioner of Police, Sir Edward Henry, upon the best way of dealing with such of those "alien friends" as lived in London; and I suggested that trustworthy committees of Czechs, Poles and other races subject to the Hapsburgs, should be formed to examine and answer for the Czecho-Slovaks and Southern Slavs of Austria-Hungary, the Poles of Austria and Prussia, and the Italians of Austria. Some provisional arrangements on these lines were made; and I was brought into touch with the "National Committees" formed in accordance with them and, in particular, with the Czechs "National Committee" of which the chairman was a restaurant-keeper named Sykora, and the secretary an illuminator and painter of miniatures named Francis Kopecky. They were honest, simple folk, in-

tensely grateful for advice and help, and unaffectedly patriotic.

One afternoon, towards the middle of September, when I was about to leave my house, I found a strange-looking man standing on the threshold. Thick set, of medium height, unshaven, grimy in appearance and in dress, with features of the semi-Tartar type that is not uncommon in Bohemia, he seemed an unprepossessing fellow.

"Are you Mr. Steed?" he asked, with a strong foreign accent and a pronounced American intonation.

"Yes," I answered. "Who are you?"

"I'm Voska," he answered.

"I don't know you," I said. "What do you want?"

"I have a message from the Professor."

"What Professor?"

"Masaryk."

"Come in."

Voska came in and began: "I'm Voska, the head of the Bohemian Alliance in America. I am an American citizen."

"Where do you come from and when did you see the Professor?"

"I left Prague with thirty American citizens five days ago. In an hour I must catch my train to Liverpool with them. Before I left, the Professor said to me: 'In London, see Mr. Steed. Tell him the Russians shoot at our boys when they want to surrender. Our boys wave handkerchiefs but the Russians shoot all the same. Tell Mr. Steed to find means of stopping it. Our boys want to go over to the Russians."

"How on earth am I to stop it?" I asked. "Did Masaryk say nothing else?"

"No, that was all. He just said, 'Tell Mr. Steed to stop it.'"

Here, I thought, is a pretty business. Masaryk would certainly not have sent to me any man whom he did not trust. But Voska's appearance was the reverse of prepossessing. He explained, however, that he had been travelling night and day for five days, that he had been unable to shave and that he had slept little because, on his way through Germany, he had kept careful note of all the German guns and troops he

had seen going westwards. He had made a list of them and had concealed it in the heel of his boot.

I asked him what he did in America and whether he knew any of our people. He said he had been expelled as a youth from Bohemia for advocating Socialist doctrines and had gone to America where, for a time, he had edited a Czech Socialist newspaper. Then he acquired an interest in a Kansas marble quarry and had made a small fortune which he was devoting to the organization of the American Czechs in support of the Allied cause, since the freedom of Bohemia could come only through an Allied victory. He wished to know how long the war would last. I told him that Kitchener and Northcliffe thought it would last at least three years. Voska, or one of the London Czechs, found means to inform Masaryk of those opinions which, as Masaryk afterwards told me, had a decisive influence upon Masaryk's activities. They convinced him that, in three years, there would be time to work seriously for the liberation of Bohemia.

Voska's tone was so earnest and his language so simple that I gave him a note of introduction to the Washington correspondent of *The Times* through whom he presently got into touch with the British Naval attaché, Captain Gaunt. When he had gone, I sat down to think out ways and means of doing what Masaryk wanted.

I thought of the scene at Prague in June, 1912, when I had stood by Masaryk's side while the assembled Sokols of all Slav races sang the "Hei Slovane." I remembered that Masaryk had criticized the jingo tone of the Czech words, and and that the Poles sang to the same air their song, "Poland Is Not Yet Lost." The chief thing was that all the Slavs knew the air. If the Czech troops who might wish to surrender to the Russians were to sing the "Hei Slovane" at midnight in their trenches, the Russians might be warned to take the singing as a signal. The singing of the "Hei Slovane" by the Czechs would not necessarily arouse suspicion in the Austrian Army, because it was the favourite Czech song. In any case, this was the only expedient I could conceive.

But before it could be employed, a message would have to

be sent to Masaryk — no easy matter. He would probably be under police observation and all his correspondence would be censored. A messenger must be sent, and such a messenger as not to arouse suspicion.

The only people who could find him would be the Czechs of London. Therefore I applied to my acquaintances Sykora and Kopecky. They came to *The Times* office towards midnight — the hour they always preferred — and after some consideration they thought they could find a messenger. A few days later they produced him — a sturdy little hunchback, with a magnificent hump, whom no Austrian would dream of claiming for the army. He was an Austrian subject liable to repatriation, and was ready to go to Prague out of "patriotism," though not the variety of patriotism which the Austrian authorities favoured. I catechized him severely, and when satisfied with his trustworthiness, repeated to him in English and in German, until he knew them by heart, the following instructions. "Find Professor Masaryk. When you are alone with him, but not before, say 'Steed says the boys must sing "Hei Slovane" at midnight.' Forget this till you are alone with Masaryk and forget it afterwards."

As a matter of fact, the hunchback did not carry that message. Another equally devoted Czech turned up in London on his way to Prague and took it. When he had started I went to Count Benckendorff, the Russian Ambassador, told him the story, and asked him to send to M. Sazonof, the Russian Foreign Minister, who had once been my neighbour in Rome, a request in my name that instructions should be given by Russian headquarters to the commanders on the Russo-Austrian front that, if the "Hei Slovane," or "Poland Is Not Yet Lost," were heard at midnight on any part of the front, it would mean that Czechs were coming over into the Russian lines and must not be fired upon. Count Benckendorff telegraphed the message and there, as far as I was concerned, the matter ended.

It had, however, a sequel in 1918. At that time some of the British Labour leaders felt their knowledge of foreign affairs to be somewhat inadequate, and they asked me, Dr.

Seton-Watson, Professor (now Sir) Bernard Pares, and others, to dine with them from time to time and to answer the questions they would put. They did not wish to be preached to but only to extract from us such information as we might be able to give. At one of the first dinners they asked questions about the Czecho-Slovak Legion which had been formed in Russia by Masaryk after the revolution of 1917 and was then marching through Siberia towards Vladivostok. I gave them a general account of the Czechs and the Slovaks and referred them to Dr. Seton-Watson for more minute particulars. These he proceeded to give until Bernard Pares (who had been British "observer" on the Russian front during the early part of the war) interrupted impetuously, saying:

"But all this gives you no idea of what splendid fellows these Czechs are. When I was on the Galician front in the winter of 1914–15, I was awakened again and again, between one and two in the morning, by batches of them who had been taken prisoners, marching through the camp and singing at the top of their voices. Nothwithstanding the bitter cold and the early hour, they were as merry as crickets."

"What were they singing, Pares?" I asked.

"The funny thing is that they were singing a song that was forbidden in Russia — 'Poland Is Not Yet Lost.'" he said.

"That is interesting," I answered. "Now let me tell you the other end of the story."

How many of the Czechs and Slovaks in the Austro-Hungarian Army went over to the Russians under this arrangement I do not know. They may, at first, have been only a regiment or part of a regiment; but, as the war went on, the movement spread and affected not only the Czecho-Slovaks but the Southern Slavs who eventually formed a legion of their own in Russia. I know only that my message was delivered to Masaryk and that Masaryk passed it on. But, until very recently, I had little documentary proof to substantiate my recollections. A few months ago, however, President Masaryk wrote me that he had completed a volume relating his activities during the war. He added, "It starts in September, 1914, when I sent Voska to you. That was the beginning."

In October, 1914, I received a further message from Masaryk, by way of Holland, to say that he would be at Rotterdam towards the end of the month and wished to meet me or Dr. Seton-Watson there. As it was impossible for me to go then to Holland, Dr. Seton-Watson went instead, met Masaryk, and returned with a general indication of his policy of which he informed me and the British Foreign Office. Few understood at that time the importance of Masaryk's work or his unique ascendancy over the Slav peoples of Austria-Hungary. Most British public men thought it a hare-brained business to take serious account of him or to suppose that an isolated Slovak Professor at Prague, who must be suspect to the Austrian Government, could render valid service to the Allied cause. Even the strength of the Czecho-Slovak national movement was not understood. Were not the Czechs and Slovaks tightly wedged in between Germany and Hungary, with ten million Austrian Germans on their flanks? Among prominent British statesmen only the late Lord Bryce fully grasped the potentialities of the position. The rest of us were comparatively obscure and unknown folk. But we knew enough to be sure that we were on the right road, to have strong faith in the Austro-Hungarian Slavs, and to comprehend the essential fact that there could be no Allied victory without the discomfiture of the Hapsburg Monarchy.

VOSKA AND KOPECKY

Meanwhile Voska had returned to the United States whence he wrote me to ask for advice; but before I could give it he had thrown himself into work that became one of the romances of the war. Of it I am not able to write in detail. That he alone could do. I know only that, through my introduction, he got into touch with the British Intelligence Officers in America; coöperated whole-heartedly and devotedly with them; formed a secret inner organization among the members of the Bohemian Alliance; placed one or more of his faithful helpers in every German or Austro-Hungarian plot to promote strikes and sabotage in American munition works, and thus

frustrated many a knavish trick; found means of persuading the American Government to rescind the order forbidding British merchantmen armed against submarines to enter New York Harbour; had a shrewd notion of what happened to the notorious Dr. Albert's portfolio on the Elevated Railway; kept so sharp an eye on the German naval and military agents, Captains von Papen and Boy-Ed, that they presently departed from the United States; helped to detect the dangerous German spy, von Rintelen; and ultimately succeeded in causing Trebitsch-Lincoln, the Hungarian-Jewish forger and German spy who had been a British Member of Parliament, to be laid by the heels. Voska's organization examined daily, for months, the mails of the German Consulate at New York, and placed a trustworthy observer in the immediate neighbourhood of the German Ambassador to the United States. When America entered the war, Voska joined the army; and I presently met him in Paris in the trim and becoming uniform of an American officer. On the roll of men who "did their bit," Voska's name should stand high.

Equal in devotion if not in achievement, for his opportunities were fewer, was Francis Kopecky. The figure of that sallow, round-shouldered, long-haired illuminator and painter of miniatures, which haunted my room at *The Times* towards midnight in 1914 and 1915, will never fade from my memory. Kopecky was entirely unconscious that he was doing anything unusual. He was always apologetic, timid, and fearful of giving trouble. Yet, at the risk of his life, he went to the United States in 1915 to help Voska's organization in preventing strikes among the workers employed by American munition firms. He watched over those of his fellow countrymen in Great Britain who had been inadvertently placed in internment camps, and he shepherded, with extraordinary tenacity, the Czecho-Slovaks who were at liberty. One night he came to me with a mien more apologetic than usual. He had a great service to ask of me. The Czechs in England, he said, wished to enlist in the British Army but the military authorities would not enroll aliens and, still less, alien enemies. Yet his flock wished to fight for Czecho-Slovakia by fighting for

England. Could I use my influence to induce the War Office to accept them? If so, I should render the Czechs a great service for which they would be eternally grateful.

It seemed a hopeless task, but I did my best; and thanks to the intelligent support of Mr. Cubitt, a permanent secretary at the War Office, consent was presently obtained. Kopecky's face beamed with joy; but he soon returned, more dejected than ever. His Czechs, it appeared, had been put into the Labour Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment, a battalion composed of all sorts of "conscientious objectors," ex-Germans, and other stalwarts, who enjoyed the collective nickname of "The Kaiser's Own." The Czechs, said Kopecky, wanted to fight, not merely to work. Could I get them transferred to fighting units?

Once again Mr. Cubitt helped to bring about the desired transfer. Kopecky came to thank me; but he was sad and diffident. He had a very great service to ask of me. Though he was no longer quite young, and had domestic obligations, and was not exactly of military build, he felt it was his duty also to join the army, lest it be thought that he had encouraged the other Czechs to join while he was shirking. He doubted whether he could pass the military test of physical fitness; but he thought that, if I would use my influence in his favour, the army doctors might be told to shut one eye and let him fight.

Whether my representations had any effect or whether the need for men was so great that the army doctors shut an eye without instructions, I do not know; but, one midnight, Kopecky appeared in my room looking radiantly happy. He had passed the test and was leaving next day for training. I heard nothing more of him until, some months later, I received a postcard bearing the photograph of a strapping, big-chested fellow, with close-cropped hair, in the uniform of a gunner in the artillery of the Guards. It was signed "Francis Kopecky." Then, in December, 1917, the same gunner called at my house. He was home on leave after having been through severe fighting at Bourlon Wood and at the battle of Cambrai. He looked the picture of health and strong enough to fell an ox.

He sang the praises of the Guards and said, " The ' Tommies ' are nice people when they come to know you, but it was a little hard at first. They trust me now and I am able to explain to them that Czecho-Slovaks are not Huns. I think it does good. I am the only alien in the Guards." Then, as a further " favour," he asked that, should there be any question of transferring Czecho-Slovak volunteers from the Allied armies to a special Czecho-Slovak legion on the Western front, I would use my influence to have him kept in the British Army where, he thought, his work might be more valuable than elsewhere. Before returning to the front he asked me also if I could give him a photograph of myself.

I had no photograph, but ultimately found a deplorable likeness that had once done duty on a Hungarian railway pass. This I cut out and gave to him; and, until the autumn of 1919, I heard no more of Kopecky. Then he telephoned to say that he wished to see me, as he had a great favour to ask, and he wanted to know whether he might come at midnight " as usual." He came at midnight with a brown-paper parcel under his arm, tied up with string, which he asked me " as a great favour " to accept " as a small token of gratitude for all I had done for him." He explained that he had been " demobbed " and had resumed his painting. Then he opened the parcel which contained, in an oak frame, a beautifully illuminated border surrounding a miniature after the lamentable likeness I had given him in December, 1917. It hangs in my bedroom, and will hang there long, as my most cherished souvenir of the war.

The story of Kopecky is typical of the quality of the best Czechs. While some other technically " alien enemy " races pestered me during the war for help to keep them out of the army or to save them from internment, the Czechs pestered me to get them into the army so that they might have a chance of fighting and dying for their country. When a people — which was literally decapitated in the 17th century by the Hapsburgs acting as instruments of the Jesuit Counter-Reformation, and was thereafter reduced to vassalage and downtrodden in every way, with a foreign aristocracy foisted

upon it and the whole power of the Hapsburg State used to crush its aspirations towards freedom—when such a people can preserve the grit and the tenacity to achieve what the Czecho-Slovaks have achieved, it has assuredly a claim to a better future and a strong title to the esteem and the goodwill of the civilized world.

THE SOUTHERN SLAVS

Comparable to the Czechs and Slovaks in tenacity, though as different in mental and moral texture as Southern races usually are from races more Northern, were many of the Southern Slavs, or Croats, Serbs and Slovenes of Austria-Hungary. Of them there were few in England before the war, and the significance of their cause was overshadowed by that of the cause of Serbia proper. For Serbia it was easy to arouse enthusiasm. The gallantry of her resistance to Austria-Hungary; the bloody defeats which her veteran troops inflicted upon the Hapsburg armies and her position as warden of the gate to the East, were quickly appreciated by the British Government and the British people alike. But the Southern Slav question in itself was little known and less understood. To me it was one of the key problems of the war, for the Austro-Hungarian attack upon Serbia was intelligible only as a wrong-headed attempt to solve it in favour of the Hapsburgs acting, consciously or unconsciously, as the agents of pan-Germanism. Just as they had failed to deal reasonably with the Italian question in the middle of last century and had simultaneously misconceived the German question, so the Hapsburgs had now, it seemed to me, staked their very existence on a far more desperate gamble and had thrown the dice so recklessly that the civilized world could not allow them to win. Though the main theatres of war were necessarily on the Western and Russian fronts, it was, in my eyes, axiomatic that the Austro-Balkan issue, out of which the struggle had arisen, would continue to govern the whole contest.

This view I expressed in September, 1914, to Sir Edward Grey when, meeting me on the stairs of the Foreign Office,

he took me into his room and asked my opinion on the Balkan outlook.

"In my opinion," I said, "the Allies have no time to lose unless they wish the Balkans to go against them. Germany intends to control the whole route to the East and will leave no stone unturned to get hold of Bulgaria and Turkey. [I did not know that she had already got hold of them.] The first thing for the Allies to do is to create a moral basis for their intervention. They are fighting for Belgium and, indirectly, for Serbia. They have proclaimed the sanctity of the rights of small nations. England, France and Russia ought at once to tell the Balkan States that the Allies are resolved to fight the war through to victory and that, in the peace settlement, they will give, as nearly as possible, ethnographical boundaries to all the Balkan peoples. In the same breath," I added, "we should ask the Balkan States whether, on this understanding, they are for us or against us. Serbia is already with us. Greece and Rumania would probably join us. Bulgaria might hesitate. An ethnographical delimitation of the Balkan peninsula would put an end to Bulgarian dreams of hegemony; and there may well be, besides, a definite understanding between Ferdinand of Bulgaria and the Austrians. But, if Bulgaria should hesitate and Greece and Rumania were well-disposed, the Allies ought to ask the Greeks, Rumanians, and the Serbs to invade Bulgaria immediately, before she can mobilize, and to hold her hostage until the end of the war. This would also have a salutary effect upon Turkey."

"Such a policy would be terribly drastic," objected Sir Edward Grey. "I doubt if we should be justified in adopting it."

"*We are at war,* Sir Edward," I answered, "and if we do not forestall the enemy, the enemy will forestall us."

I still think that a bold policy of this description might, at that moment, have changed the position in Southeastern Europe. But many of the advisers of the Foreign Office refused to believe that Bulgaria had a definite agreement with Austria-Hungary or that Turkey was about to throw in her lot with Germany. They thought that Bulgaria could be won

over by a promise that she should get practically the whole of Macedonia, including Monastir, if not Uskub (or Skoplje) which Serbia had won by arms in the first Balkan War and had defended successfully in the second. They overlooked the consideration that to promise, to a doubtful neutral, territory already belonging to an effective ally, would have been not only unjust but impolitic, inasmuch as it would have filled the Serbians with indignation and would have been regarded by them as treachery. Had, however, the Allies promised to Serbia, Bulgaria, Rumania and Greece the establishment of their several national unities, as nearly as possible in accordance with ethnography, the Serbians would eventually have found in union, on a basis of equality, with their Southern Slav kindred of Austria-Hungary, and in an assured outlet to the sea, ample compensation for any territory they might have to relinquish in Macedonia; Rumania would have secured Transylvania, a large part of the Bukovina and, possibly, some portions of Bessarabia, while Greece would have found her position greatly strengthened and consolidated.

No other practicable policy, it seemed to me, had any chance of success at that juncture. When, in consequence of British blundering, the German cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau* escaped from the Mediterranean and reached Constantinople, and when the confiscation of the two battleships which had been built for Turkey in England inflamed Turkish feeling, it became clear to all who had any notion of the true situation at Constantinople and of the tendencies of the Committee for Union and Progress, that the adhesion of Turkey to the Central Powers was but a question of weeks. Nevertheless, illusions on this score were still entertained by the British Embassy at Constantinople and by the Foreign Office, which resented so keenly the mild strictures of *The Times* upon British diplomatic action — as revealed in a White Paper on the outbreak of war with Turkey — that relations between the Foreign Office and *The Times* were completely severed during the winter of 1914–15. The whole Government became, indeed, exceedingly resentful of independent press criticism and failed entirely to understand that, in a great crisis, the support of

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newspapers is valuable in proportion as they give it freely and from conviction.

SUPILO

But before this severance occurred, I was able to bring the Foreign Office into closer touch with the Southern Slav question. Towards the end of September, 1914, my old friend Supilo, the hero of the Friedjung trial, reached London. He had fortunately been mountaineering in Switzerland at the end of July and had thus escaped the fate which would certainly have awaited him had the Austro-Hungarian authorities been able to lay hands upon him. They would have made him pay dearly for the failure of their conspiracy against him during the Bosnian annexation crisis of 1908-09. I felt great relief on hearing of his escape, for I thought that, with his help and that of Masaryk, British politicians might presently be brought to understand the position of Austria-Hungary as the most vulnerable point in the enemy combination, and that they would be impressed by Supilo's natural political genius.

This expectation was fulfilled. The big, lumbering Dalmatian peasant, whose massive head seemed to weigh heavily even upon his powerful shoulders, whose thick boots and inelegant dress bore no trace of diplomatic tidiness, quickly won the esteem of Sir Edward Grey and was received at the table of the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith. Though he spoke little English, and his French was then excruciating (he spoke Italian, German and Magyar fluently besides his native Croat), Supilo's grasp of the essentials of the European situation and his strong faith in the justice and in the vital importance to the Allies of the Southern Slav cause, gained for him the sympathetic attention of all with whom he came into contact. In happier circumstances and with a better initial education — as a boy all Austrian schools had been closed to him on account of a childish demonstration he had made against the Archduke Rudolph—Supilo might have been a great statesman. To insight and energy he joined a resourcefulness that seemed inexhaustible. His worst failings were

inability to suffer fools gladly and a domineering impatience towards associates more timid or less vigorous than himself. His success in London aroused, for instance, the jealous enmity of a dapper Serbian diplomatist whose relations with the Foreign Office had rarely gone beyond formal visits to subordinate permanent officials. One day this diplomatist asked me how it was that an uncouth, hobbledehoy Dalmatian of no official standing should be admitted by British statesmen to confidential intercourse such as the accredited representative of Serbia never enjoyed. He seemed to think that some slight to Serbia must be intended. I could not say that between him and Supilo there was all the difference that separates mediocrity from genius, but I soothed him by a reference to Daudet's "Tartarin de Tarascon." "You will remember," I said, "that, in Tartarin's conception, the south-east of Europe was inhabited by 'les Teurs,' or Turks. People in England are not much wiser than Tartarin; and when they find a Balkan diplomatist dressed in the latest fashion, with waxed moustache and patent leather shoes and speaking fluent French, they feel instinctively that he cannot be the real thing. But when a lumbering, ill-dressed, outspoken fellow comes to them from the region of the 'Teurs,' they feel happier because they imagine that they are dealing with the genuine article."

What solace the Serbian diplomatist drew from my explanation I cannot say; but Supilo continued to enjoy the respect of the British Foreign Office until his fatal illness and death in September, 1917. Had he remained in England during the winter and spring of 1914-15 he might have persuaded British statesmen of the dangers involved in the secret Treaty of London which they negotiated with Italy as the price of her entry into the war, and might have led them to offer Italy inducements less detrimental to her and more consonant with Allied principles. But, during the winter, Supilo visited Serbia and, after consulting the Serbian Government, went on to Petrograd in order to bring Southern Slav interests before M. Sazonof, the Russian Foreign Minister. There he found the

mischief already afoot, if not actually done, and was baffled in his efforts to prevent it.

ITALY AND THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

The British, French and Russian Foreign Ministers were, in fact, engaged in buying Italy out of the Triple Alliance. To some extent they were working in the dark, for they did not know her exact relationship to the Central Powers. Her true position was revealed only in 1920, when the Austrian historian, Professor Alfred Francis Pribram, formerly an archivist of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office, published his invaluable little work on "The Secret Political Treaties of Austria-Hungary, 1879-1914." In the light of the texts of the Triple Alliance treaties, and of Pribram's explanatory comment, a fair estimate of Italian policy can now be formed and the basis of Sonnino's negotiations with Austria-Hungary for the continuance of Italian neutrality can be accurately defined.

On July 31, 1914, the German Ambassador in Rome informed the Italian Foreign Minister, the Marquis di San Giuliano, that Germany had called upon Russia to suspend mobilization, and upon France to declare her intentions, a time limit of twelve hours having been given to Russia and of eighteen hours to France. Germany wished also to know the intentions of the Italian Government. San Giuliano answered that, as the war undertaken by Austria was aggressive and did not fall within the purely defensive scope of the Triple Alliance, particularly in view of the consequences which, according to the declaration of the German Ambassador, might result from it, Italy could not take part in the war. On August 1st, San Giuliano informed the French Ambassador of Italy's decision, and the French Government informed Great Britain. It can have caused little surprise in Berlin, or even in Vienna. Austro-Hungarian and German statesmen knew that, in 1913, Italy had twice refused to join in a war against Serbia; while, according to Pribram, she had left no room for doubt, as long ago as the spring of 1896 (when Anglo-German relations had

been strained by the German Emperor's telegram to President Kruger), that she would not take part in a war in which France and England should be opposed to the Triple Alliance. The Italian Prime Minister, the Marquis di Rudini, had then proposed that an Italian Note to this effect should be presented at Berlin and Vienna, inasmuch as the geographical position of Italy and the inefficiency of her military and naval forces would make it impossible for her to oppose England and France; but both the German and the Austro-Hungarian Governments rejected the Italian proposal. They also declined to renew in 1896 a declaration, which had been attached to the Triple Alliance in 1882, that the Alliance was not aimed against England. Notwithstanding the conclusion, in August, 1913, of a naval agreement between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy that unified the forces of the Triple Alliance in the Mediterranean, Germany and Austria-Hungary knew that it would be hard to keep Italy in line with them in a war against England and France. Italy had used the Alliance astutely to protect her interests in North Africa, going so far as to stipulate (from February, 1887, onward) that, if any extension of a French protectorate or sovereignty in any form in North Africa should induce Italy to take extreme measures in North Africa, or against French territory in Europe, the consequent state of war between Italy and France would involve war between France and the allies of Italy, and that Germany would not only not oppose but would support Italian efforts to obtain territorial guarantees against France for the safety of the Italian frontiers and of Italian naval positions. Having thus placed Germany and Austria-Hungary at her mercy, Italy drove separate bargains about North Africa with France and England before consenting to renew the Triple Alliance in 1902. This was the famous Italian "extra-dance" with other partners, to which Prince Bülow referred in January, 1902. Thereafter the efforts of Germany and Austria-Hungary tended to prevent the complete defection of Italy from the Triple Alliance and to make sure, in the worst case, of her neutrality. They felt that while Italian neutrality might be of advantage to France inasmuch as it would — as

it did in August, 1914 — enable France to concentrate against Germany troops which would otherwise have been needed for the defence of the French Alps against Italy, it would give corresponding or even greater advantages to Germany and Austria-Hungary. As Professor Pribram observes, the nine months of Italian neutrality in 1914–15, albeit a neutrality not exactly benevolent towards her partners in the Triple Alliance, brought those partners advantages that ought not to be underestimated. "It is doubtful," he adds, "whether the German armies could have achieved their great initial successes if Italian troops had immediately appeared alongside of the French. On the Eastern theatre it might have been catastrophic if, at the very beginning of the war, Austria-Hungary had been obliged to withdraw from that theatre a considerable portion of her troops for the protection of the Austrian frontier against Italy."

SONNINO

Thus Italy accomplished the difficult task of pleasing her prospective friends while not altogether displeasing her allied foes. With one exception, the leading Italian public men seem to have approved of her policy. Giolitti, the former Prime Minister, who was in London at the end of July, 1914, hastened to inform the Italian Embassy of his conviction that Italy ought to remain neutral; and other prominent politicians whom Signor Salandra, the Prime Minister, and the Marquis di San Giuliano summoned to Rome for consultation, were of the same mind. But Sonnino, who was then in Piedmont, received the summons too late to reach Rome before the decision had been taken. So angry was he when he heard of it from his friends at the Rome railway station that he expostulated against it in the hearing of bystanders, declared that the place of Italy was by the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary, and vowed he would at once return northwards without seeing any member of the Government. His friends found it hard to calm him and to induce him not to leave immediately.

During the last few years of my stay in Austria-Hungary my correspondence with Sonnino had been intermittent and I had little knowledge of his state of mind. Indeed, it was not until the spring of 1918 that I heard of his expostulations at the railway station. Since then Giolitti has stated in his "Memories" that he, too, learned "on most trustworthy authority that, at the outbreak of the European war, Sonnino was of opinion that we should have followed our allies; and that he manifested this opinion openly to his friends on reaching Rome (whither Salandra had called him for consultation) too late and after neutrality had already been decided upon." But, within a few months, Sonnino's bearing, if not his opinion, changed. On October 16, 1914, the Foreign Minister, San Giuliano, died and, early in November, Sonnino consented to succeed him as Foreign Minister in the Salandra Cabinet. Then began a series of parallel negotiations with Austria-Hungary and Germany on the one hand, and with England, France and Russia on the other, to determine the future course of Italian policy. Had Austria-Hungary been less obdurate she would have agreed without delay to pay an adequate price — as Germany had urged her to do even before the outbreak of war — for the maintenance of Italian neutrality. Her refusal enabled Sonnino to put Italy up to auction and to secure from England, France and Russia on April 26, 1915, terms that were destined to complicate the whole Allied position.

In February, 1915, I learned that Sonnino was contemplating the contingency of war against Austria-Hungary and that military preparations to this end were being pushed forward in Italy. Therefore I wrote him, as an old friend, to say that, as far as I could judge of the situation, the eventual participation of Italy in the war would be inevitable but that everything might depend upon the way in which she came into it. "If," I added, "she comes into it on a liberal basis, proclaiming as her object the completion of her national unity and the liberation of the subject Hapsburg peoples, her task will be far easier than most Italians imagine." I explained that she would have the support of the Czechs, the Slovaks,

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the Southern Slavs and probably of the Rumanes, for I knew, from conversations with Sonnino in 1904 and 1907, that his views upon Austria-Hungary were antiquated and that he had little notion of the strength of the national movements among the subject Hapsburg races. Moreover, he shared, to a degree surprising in a man so cultivated, the prevailing Italian illusion that the eastern shore of the Adriatic was mainly Italian in spirit and in racial character.

Sonnino told me in 1916 that he received my letter but had not answered it because he thought my views mistaken. He did not believe, even then, that Austria-Hungary could be entirely defeated; and he seemed to expect that, at best, Italy might secure by war the concessions which she had failed to extract from Austria by negotiation. The Italian Green Book, issued in 1915, shows that he negotiated with Austria like a lawyer seeking to get compensation for breach of contract. Article VII of the Triple Alliance bound Austria-Hungary and Italy to use their influence to prevent changes disadvantageous to themselves in the Balkan situation and engaged them to exchange all information upon the subject which they might receive. It added: "Nevertheless, in case events should render impossible the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Balkans or on the Turkish coasts and islands in the Adriatic and in the Ægean, either in consequence of the action of a third Power or otherwise, and Austria-Hungary or Italy should be obliged to change the *status quo* by a temporary or permanent occupation, this occupation will not take place without a previous agreement between the two Powers based upon the principle of a reciprocal compensation for every advantage, territorial or other, that each of them might obtain over and above the present position and giving satisfaction to the interests and well-founded claims of the two parties."

"COMPENSATION"

This provision dated from 1887, when the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count Kálnoky, reluctantly consented, under strong pressure from Berlin, to make it the subject of a sep-

arate Austro-Italian agreement. In 1891 it was incorporated, as Article VII, in the text of the Triple Alliance itself. Thereafter it became a constant bone of contention between Vienna and Rome; but not until December 9, 1914, when Sonnino raised, in a despatch to Vienna, the question of the compensation due to Italy for the Austro-Hungarian advance against Serbia without previous consultation and agreement with Italy, was its value really put to the proof. Count Berchtold, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, replied to Sonnino on December 12th, that the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Serbian territory was neither temporary nor permanent but merely " momentary " ; and that, consequently, Article VII did not apply — an answer not devoid of humour inasmuch as the Serbian Army had taken the offensive against the Austrians on December 4th, had forced them to retreat on December 6th, had defeated them to the south of Belgrade on December 8th, had retaken the town of Valievo on December 9th, and were pursuing them hotly on December 12th. By the 13th, the Austro-Hungarian rout in Serbia was complete; and on the 15th Marshal Putnik, the Serbian Commander-in-Chief, enabled King Peter to return to Belgrade after having cleared Serbian territory of the enemy, captured more than 60,000 prisoners and taken 200 guns. Despite, or because of, this setback, Sonnino pressed his enquiries; and, after Count Berchtold had been succeeded by Baron Burián ás Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister on January 13, 1915, German pressure induced Austria-Hungary to discuss the question of compensation with Italy. Burián's first suggestion was that Italy should take as compensation territory belonging to others, but Sonnino insisted that the price for Italy's neutrality must be paid in territory belonging to Austria and that the territory must not be merely promised but handed over immediately upon the conclusion of an agreement. Throughout the early months of 1915 the negotiations continued, though the Duke Avarna, Italian Ambassador in Vienna, warned Sonnino on February 22nd that the Austro-Hungarian Government " will never, under present conditions, consent to the cession of territories belonging to the Mon-

archy." Nevertheless, on March 27th, Burián did suggest that Austria should cede to Italy, at the end of the war, a part of the Southern Tyrol comprising the city of Trent; but he declined to consider any immediate cession.

THE END OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

Early in April, Germany and Austria-Hungary spread rumours that they were contemplating a separate peace with Russia — by way of persuading Italy that, unless she came promptly to terms with Austria-Hungary, she might have to face the whole Austro-Hungarian Army. Sonnino therefore made haste. He demanded from Austria-Hungary extensive cessions of territory in the Southern Tyrol and in the neighbourhood of the Adriatic, up to within a stone's throw of Trieste; the separation of the city and territory of Trieste from Austria, and their erection into an autonomous and independent State; the cession to Italy of a large number of Dalmatian islands; the recognition by Austria-Hungary of Italy's full sovereignty over Valona, the chief Albanian port; and an undertaking that Austria-Hungary was no longer interested in Albania. In return, he was prepared to give, on behalf of Italy, a declaration of "perfect neutrality throughout the present war in regard to Austria-Hungary and Germany."

These conditions having been rejected by Baron Burián, Sonnino — who had concluded on April 26th the Treaty of London with England, France and Russia — informed him that it would be useless to maintain the formal appearance of an alliance which could only serve to dissemble the reality of continual mistrust and daily opposition, and that Italy therefore resumed her complete liberty of action and " declares as cancelled and as henceforth without effect her Treaty of Alliance with Austria-Hungary." In view of Sonnino's original opinion that Italy ought to have joined Germany and Austria-Hungary against England, France and Russia, special interest attaches to the following passage of the despatch in which he put an end to the Triple Alliance:

By disregarding the obligations imposed by the Treaty, Austria-Hungary profoundly disturbed the Balkan *status quo*, and created a situation from which she alone would profit to the detriment of interests of the greatest importance which her Ally had so often affirmed and proclaimed.

So flagrant a violation of the letter and the spirit of the Treaty not only justified Italy's refusal to place herself on the side of her Allies in a war provoked without previous notice to her, but at the same time deprived the Alliance of its essential character and of its *raison d'être*.

THE TREATY OF LONDON

No trace of idealism or sentiment is to be found in the Italian Green Book which records the chief phases of these negotiations — just as little, in fact, as Sonnino showed in the negotiations which he conducted concurrently with England, France and Russia. The Treaty of London provided for the conclusion of a military convention to settle the minimum number of troops to be employed by Russia against Austria-Hungary so as to prevent the concentration of the whole Austro-Hungarian Army against Italy; while Italy, for her part, undertook to use all her resources in making war jointly with France, Great Britain and Russia "against all their enemies." (In practice, Italy failed to declare or to make war upon Germany until August 27, 1916, fifteen months after her declaration of war against Austria-Hungary.) The Treaty engaged the French and British fleets to render active and permanent assistance to Italy until the Austro-Hungarian fleet should have been destroyed or peace concluded; and promised to Italy that, at the Peace, she should receive Cisalpine Tyrol up to the Brenner frontier, the counties of Gorizia and Gradisca as well as Trieste, the whole of Istria with the larger and most of the smaller Istrian Islands, the province of Dalmatia with the islands to the north and west of the Dalmatian coast, while the rest of the eastern shore of the Adriatic and all the islands not given to Italy (with the exception of the Montenegrin coast) should be neutralized. In addition, Italy was promised full sovereignty over the Albanian port of Valona, the island of Saseno, and surrounding

territory of sufficient extent to ensure their defence, though Italy agreed that Albania itself should be divided between Montenegro, Serbia and Greece if France, England and Russia should so desire. In the Ægean, Italy was to have full sovereignty over the Greek islands of the Dodecanese under her occupation; and, in the event of the partition of Turkey, a portion of Turkish territory in Asia Minor. She was promised also territorial compensation from France and England in Africa should they increase their colonial possessions at the expense of Germany; a loan of £50,000,000 from Great Britain; and the support of the Allies in opposing the introduction of a representative of the Holy See in any peace negotiations or in the settlement of questions raised by the war. In return, Italy promised to take the field within a month of the signing of the Treaty. The whole Treaty was to remain secret.

Had the French and British Governments deliberately set themselves to stultify the principles on which the Allied peoples believed they were fighting the war — respect for the rights of small peoples as opposed to the strategic requirements of Great Powers, the principle of democratic freedom as opposed to militarism, the idea, in short, of government by consent of the governed as against the imposition of government by force — they could hardly have set their hands to a more effective document than the Treaty of London. They promised to make over to Italy a zone in the Tyrol inhabited not by Italians but by Germans; to give her, similarly, wide districts to the northwest and east of Trieste inhabited principally by Southern Slavs; to make over to her the whole province of Dalmatia of which the population was ninety-six per cent. Southern Slav and less than four per cent. Italian; to establish her rule over Albanians at Valona and over Greeks in the Ægean Islands — in short, to enable her, in the name of the strategic principle, to create centres of disaffection and unrest and to present her with a military frontier of which the effective defence would be beyond her own strength. At the time when the Treaty of London was negotiated, none of the parties to it believed in the complete overthrow of Austria-

Hungary. Sonnino imagined that the Treaty would strengthen Italy against a presumably weakened but still powerful Hapsburg Monarchy whose outlets to the sea Italy would virtually control. In the worst case he thought that the ample spoils promised to Italy would give her many counters to bargain with in the event of a negotiated peace. Between the summer of 1916 and the spring of 1918 I frequently discussed the Treaty with him, both verbally and in writing, and found him entirely inaccessible to the larger view of Italian interests which I had urged upon him in February, 1915, and which wiser Italians certainly shared. His intelligence, formerly keen, seemed to have become ossified with advancing years. His one idea was to secure a written pledge from the Allies, seeing that he had been unable, even with the support of Germany, to extract from Austria-Hungary a sufficient price for Italian neutrality — and he counted that, however bitterly the Allies might presently regret their bargain, they would not dare to treat it as a " scrap of paper."

In this respect he reckoned well; but in other respects the Treaty was a woful miscalculation. Though it was meant to be kept secret, its main provisions were, in point of fact, known in Serbia, France, England and Austria-Hungary within a week of its conclusion.

THE TRUTH LEAKS OUT

Rumours that dangerous negotiations were in progress spread in London during the first fortnight of April. Both Seton-Watson and I heard them; yet when I went to Paris on April 27, 1915, for the first time since the outbreak of war, I did not know that a Treaty had been concluded, nor had I any inkling of its scope. But Supilo, who had reached Petrograd towards the end of March, had gradually extracted much of the truth from the Russian Foreign Minister, Sazonof. He telegraphed warnings to M. Pashitch, the Serbian Prime Minister, on March 26th, and again on March 28th and 30th. On March 29th he sent a long telegram to Sir Edward Grey; and, on April 3rd, wrote to the French Foreign Minister, M. Del-

cassé. On April 3rd also he telegraphed to Dr. Trumbitch, who had escaped from Austria and was then in Rome, that Istria and the greater half of Dalmatia were completely lost; and on April 7th he confirmed this statement. Therefore he urged Trumbitch not to go to Serbia to consult Pashitch since Pashitch was already informed, but rather to go with all speed to Paris and especially to London in order to appeal to public opinion and to the French and British governments. Trumbitch nevertheless went to Serbia, was nearly captured by an Austrian destroyer on his return journey across the Adriatic, and only reached London on May 10th, more than a fortnight after the Treaty had been signed.

It is improbable that any amount of representation to French and British statesmen would then have prevented them from concluding the Treaty. Technically, the Southern Slav regions which they proposed to hand over to Italy were enemy territory, and neither Sir Edward Grey nor M. Delcassé knew enough of the Southern Slav question to understand the folly of giving way to Italian demands. Even at Petrograd, where Supilo's representations might have been expected to find readier acceptance, the Russian Foreign Office showed solicitude only for what it believed to be the Orthodox Serb population of the Adriatic; and, in the belief that some districts were inhabited by Serbs rather than by Roman Catholic Croats, it insisted that they should not be assigned to Italy. In reality, the districts it saved were inhabited mainly by Croats! But, on reaching Paris, I found that not only was Supilo's information true but that the conclusion of the Treaty was known to the Serbian Legation and to a number of Southern Slav refugees. One of them, Dr. Hinkovitch, who had been the chief counsel for the defence at the Agram High Treason Trial of 1909, was able to give me, in broad outline, the contents of the Treaty. He added also that, under the Treaty, Italy was bound to declare war within a month.

DELCASSÉ

As soon as I had heard this news, I asked M. Delcassé the French Foreign Minister, for an appointment. He re-

ceived me at 8 A.M. on Saturday, May 1st. Telling him what I had heard, I protested against the folly which the Allied Governments had committed. I predicted — and the prediction was speedily confirmed — that as soon as the nature of the Treaty were known in Austria-Hungary, as it inevitably would be in a short time, the anti-Hapsburg movement among the Austro-Hungarian Southern Slavs would cease, and the Hapsburgs would be able plausibly to represent themselves as fighting for the preservation of Southern Slav territory against Italian rapacity. I pointed out to him that, should the Allied armies be unable completely to defeat Germany and Austria-Hungary, it might be impossible to gainsay a German demand for the annexation of Belgium as a strategic necessity, since the Allies had consented to the carving up of Southern Slav and of Austrian-German territory in order to satisfy the alleged strategic necessities of Italy. France, England and Russia had, I urged, rendered the task of Italy herself needlessly difficult and dangerous by providing the Southern Slav regiments of Austria-Hungary with a strong incentive to fight desperately against Italy in defence of their own soil — and the Italians knew by experience what stout fighters the Austro-Hungarian Serbs and Croats could be. In conclusion, I told M. Delcassé that I and my friends would leave no stone unturned to undo the mischief which the Treaty could not fail to do, because there could be no true victory for the Allies and no lasting peace unless it were undone.

To my surprise, M. Delcassé heard me patiently. He did not deny the accuracy of my information nor did he attempt to controvert my arguments. After a pause he said:

"We may have done wrong, but we were placed in a terribly hard position. Italy put a pistol to our heads. Think what it means. Within a month there will be a million Italian bayonets in the field, and shortly afterwards 600,000 Rumanians. Reinforcements as large as that may be worth some sacrifice, even of principle. But I ask you, was there ever a moment in the history of the world when decisions were so difficult, or the responsibility of statesmen so heavy?"

The prospective entry of Rumania into the war was new to me, and I asked M. Delcassé whether he were sure of it.

"Yes," he said, "Italy will make war before the end of this month, and Rumania in June. That," he added, "should hasten an Allied victory."

What grounds M. Delcassé had for believing that Rumania would make war in June, 1915, I never learned. She did not, in fact, make war until August, 1916. But I was constrained to admit that the temptation to Allied statesmen had been severe, and that they would have needed to know far more than they knew in order to withstand Italian pressure.

On returning to London I verified, as far as possible, the information I had obtained in Paris, and wrote, on May 7, a letter to the Rome correspondent of *The Times* informing him of the principle features of the Treaty and adding:

In Paris, where the main lines of the Convention [as the Treaty was then called] are pretty generally known, I found great uneasiness as to the responsibilities which it involves. Barrère [the French Ambassador in Rome], Delcassé, and Cambon seem to have pressed hard for the conclusion of some arrangement that would bring in the Italians — and presumably also the Rumanians — on our side. But the feeling that we have allowed Italy to coerce us into abandoning the principle of Nationality in favour of the strategic principle which Germany invokes in justification of her misdeeds, neutralizes the satisfaction that would otherwise be felt at the prospect of Italian intervention. There appears to have been some demand on the part of Italy for the assistance of French troops in order to stiffen the Italian Army; but Joffre, whom I saw on Tuesday [May 4], absolutely refuses to detach a single man from his front for the purpose.

The existence of the Convention is less generally known in England than in France; but, in quarters where it is known, misgivings are very pronounced. The Serbian cause has become very popular here; and when it is realized that a part of Serbo-Croatian territory has been sacrificed, not only without the consent of Serbia but without any consultation with Serbia; and when the intensity of Serbian military and political feeling on the subject is known, there may be a dangerous reaction unless the Italians act quickly and are everywhere victorious. Things at Nish [then the seat of the Serbian Government] are so bad that the heads of the army are talking of concluding a tacit or explicit armistice with Austria in order to set free Austrian troops to resist the Italian invasion

of Southern Slav territory. Pashitch is doing his best to stem the tide; but the latest information received at the French Foreign Office was to the effect that Pashitch might not be able to weather the storm. . . .

Therefore, if Italy is wise she will refrain from occupying the Slav territories allotted to her under the Convention, and will seek to base an agreement with Serbia and the Southern Slav leaders upon an undertaking that the Dalmatian coasts and harbours to which she aspires shall be neutralized. If this is done, and the actual leanings of the population ascertained by means of plebiscites, there may still be a chance of a comparatively cordial understanding. Otherwise I see nothing but trouble ahead.

As the relations between *The Times* and the British Foreign Office were still interrupted, I had no means of sending this letter to Rome save through the ordinary post. It was probable that the censor would stop it but, in that case, the Government would know that we knew what had been done. Should it escape the British censor and reach Italy, the Italian censor might open it — and the Italian Government would know that the secrecy on which it had counted was already at an end. Therefore I posted the letter and awaited results. Within forty-eight hours an important official telephoned me from the Foreign Office to enquire whether I could call upon him. I asked whether he were speaking on behalf of Sir Edward Grey and added that if the Foreign Secretary no longer insisted that *The Times* should disavow its justified criticism upon a public document submitted by the Government to Parliament (the White Paper on the outbreak of war with Turkey), I should be willing to call, but otherwise not.

"You can safely call," was the reply.

When I called, the official took some exception to a leading article which had appeared in *The Times* that morning upon the attitude of the United States, but I warned him that I did not recognize the right of a Foreign Office official to discuss with me the leading articles of *The Times*. The official then expressed regret at the "misunderstanding" which had caused the severance of relations between *The Times* and the Foreign Office and produced from his pocket my letter to the correspondent of *The Times* at Rome.

"You sent this through the post," he said.

"Yes, how else was I to send it?"

"Well," he continued, "if you will change it slightly we will forward it for you ourselves. Where you got your information I cannot guess; but it is so accurate and the advice you give is so salutary that, with a verbal alteration or two, it will be wholesome for the Italians to know what is thought in this country."

I agreed to change some words which were immaterial to the sense of the letter and it was forwarded in the Foreign Office bag. At the same time the normal relations of independent consultation and exchange of information between *The Times* and the Foreign Office were resumed.

"PERFIDIOUS ALBION"

In a sense, my early knowledge of the Treaty of London was an accident, for I had gone to Paris for quite another purpose. A French Protestant organization, called "Foi et Vie," had arranged a series of lectures by French and Allied speakers in the hope of acquainting the Parisian public with the efforts and the standpoints of the various Allied countries. The series had been opened by the French philosophers, MM. Boutroux and Bergson; M. Vandervelde, the eminent Belgian orator, had spoken for Belgium; Signor Guglielmo Ferrero, the Italian historian, had spoken for Italy, and I had been asked to speak for England. The task was not easy. French public opinion had become restive and was inclined to be critical both of the protraction of the war and of the apparently insignificant military contribution made to it by England. Of "propaganda," such as all belligerent countries afterwards organized, there was then none. The very solidity of the British military hospitals and other buildings in the north of France had made many Frenchmen suspect that, once established on French soil, England would fix herself there and that, after the war, she would retain possession at least of Calais. This fear gave much amusement to Englishmen and was the subject of an anecdote in which the British Ambassador, Sir

Francis (afterwards Lord) Bertie, figured to advantage. M. Hanotaux, the former French Minister for Foreign Affairs, an inveterate Anglophobe who had no relations with the British Embassy, had been invited by a Parisian hostess to meet Sir Francis Bertie and, by way of opening the conversation tactfully, had said, "Many people think, M. l'Ambassadeur, that the British establishments in the north look remarkably permanent."

"They are quite right," answered Sir Francis Bertie promptly. "When we were last there we stayed the devil of a time."

I had to take this state of mind into account and to reckon with the almost unconscious French tendency to attribute "perfidy" to England. But I knew that no amount of expostulation or asseveration would make any impression upon a Parisian audience which, above all things, loves logical clearness. Therefore I set out to give a more or less logical explanation of that thoroughly illogical phenomenon, the English character; and lest my audience, which consisted of some two thousand persons drawn from all classes of French society — workmen, bankers, diplomatists, students, politicians, and elegant ladies — should imagine that I was seeking either to extol my own country or to depreciate it in order to gain their favour, I said:

During my long residence abroad, in Germany, France, Italy and Austria-Hungary, I got into the way of looking at England with the objectivity that distance facilitates, even though that very distance strengthen love of one's own country. This habit remains with me. I still feel the need to "understand" England while recognizing that few things are harder.

The English are, above all, creatures of instinct. They distrust ideas. They have a horror of logic. Show them by irrefutable reasoning that they ought to do this or that, and they will revolt. An instinct deeper than reason tells them that life itself is not logical, that it is compounded of an energy that is often blind, an energy of which the mainspring lies below what psychologists call "the threshold of consciousness." At ordinary times, a clear view of national needs is very rare in England; but, on the other hand, a practical sense of individual needs and a restlessness, that some-

times becomes a spirit of adventure, are common to most Englishmen.

I foresee the objection that, nevertheless, the English do not lack ideas nor does England lack idealists. She has given birth to some of the greatest thinkers. Besides, England has had, in the recent past, her "intellectuals," pacifists and doctrinaires. They have disputed frequently and noisily about political, religious and social questions. But if England is watched closely, there is often seen to be a flagrant contradiction between the ideas that are expressed and the behaviour of those who express them. They live in the purest inconsistency — without knowing it.

Here we touch the root of the problem and reach the source of what is called English hypocrisy or perfidy. The first time an Englishman hears his country accused of perfidy or hypocrisy his astonishment is equalled only by his conviction that those who accuse her are either ignorant or insincere. What is the truth? My own conclusion is that the great majority of my fellow countrymen are never, or very seldom, perfidious or hypocritical, but are almost always inconsistent. Now inconsistency is not hypocrisy unless people are conscious of their inconsistency. But between the two sections of the English mind, the section that holds views or ideas and the section from which fundamental impulses proceed, there is a kind of watertight bulkhead. What an Englishman may say at moments of normal quiet gives no clue to what he will do at a moment of individual or national crisis. Then it is that he shows himself, that his real temperament comes out, that he talks little and does things. Just now he is doing things."

Upon the basis of this rough definition, which I still think broadly true, I built an account of England before the war; an explanation of the tardiness of the British Government to declare itself, even after war had begun between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, Germany and Russia, and Germany and France; assured my audience that, once in the war, England would go through with it no matter at what cost, and concluded with a precise reference to the Treaty of London which all the diplomatists and many of the politicians among my audience understood:—

In their heart of hearts the English know but one fear, a fear that is almost a prayer. They fear that, during this great fight, the wisdom of their political chiefs may not rise to the level of the Allied peoples' resolve; and their prayer is that the faith in the principles of human liberty, of justice towards little countries, and

of morality among nations, which inspired the Allies at the beginning of the war, may guide and sustain them until the work of European regeneration has been entirely done. The British people, like the people of France, knows that its chief strength lies in the justice of its cause, in the principle of freedom for small nations which its Government has proclaimed aloud. I believe firmly that it will not tolerate the abandonment of this principle or the substitution for it of the strategic principle in whose name Germany is committing all her abominations. If its present Government should forsake this truth, the English people will transfer its confidence to men of mind lofty enough to comprehend that the old world in which we lived before the war belongs to history and that we are struggling for a right of entry into another world, healthier, nobler, and of purer air.

Three weeks after this statement — which seemed little short of impious to some members of the French Government — Mr. Asquith was obliged to reconstruct the British Cabinet on a broader basis and to make of it a national government by including leading members of the Opposition. For some time it had been clear that the Government was not equal to the task of pushing forward the war with the necessary vision and energy. Most of its members had not yet lost the peace habit of mind; and there was still little coördination between the various Departments of State which, before the war, had been so many petty autocracies. To the exhortations of the press, the Government had turned a deaf ear. Even Lord Kitchener and the Ordnance Authorities of the army would not allow themselves to be convinced that high explosives and an unlimited supply of guns and shells were indispensable to military success. Great expectations had been based upon the Allied spring offensive; and General Joffre, whom I had seen at Chantilly, then French Headquarters, on May 4th, had explained to me confidently the tactics he meant to employ. On a piece of paper he drew a sketch of the German lines and wire entanglements, showed how French artillery would be concentrated upon a narrow front until everything had been smashed, how infantry would then pour through the gap and take in the flank the German forces holding the trenches on either side, and thus widen the breach through

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which a much broader offensive could be launched. Why these tactics failed to effect a " break through " of the German line, the military history of the war records. They were revised in the autumn but still yielded little positive result, greatly to the disappointment of France. In England, the employment of gas by the Germans at the beginning of May, the heavy fighting in the second battle of Ypres, the legendary gallantry of the Canadians, and, especially, the paralysis of the British attack at Festubert by lack of shells, brought on a crisis in public feeling that compelled the Government to choose between resignation and reconstruction. The turning point was the publication in *The Times* on May 14th of a telegram from Colonel Repington, its military correspondent, who had seen the attack at Festubert, stating that " the want of an unlimited supply of high explosives was a fatal bar to our success at Festubert." As a result of these revelations, the Government was reconstructed with the help of Mr. Balfour, Lord Curzon, Mr. Bonar Law and other Conservatives, Mr. Lloyd George relinquishing the Chancellorship of the Exchequer in order to establish a special Ministry of Munitions. The situation was complicated by the personal action of Lord Northcliffe, who wrote and published in the *Daily Mail* of May 22nd a violent attack upon Lord Kitchener. Upon the expediency of this attack and the effect of it opinions still differ. At the time, it aroused intense indignation. I knew nothing of it until it was published; though, on the night when the *Daily Mail* printed it, I found Lord Northcliffe sitting in the editor's room at *The Times* office with an expression more grim than I had ever seen on his face or ever saw again. In after years he often referred to his article and maintained that it had been necessary. " I did not care whether the circulation of *The Times* dropped to one copy and that of the *Daily Mail* to two," he would say. "I consulted no one about it except my mother, and she agreed with it. I felt that the war was becoming too big for Kitchener, and that public belief in him, which was indispensable at the outset, was becoming an obstacle to military progress. Therefore I did my best to shake things up."

"REVENGE"

He undoubtedly "shook things up" in a way perplexing to those who imagined him to be a mere popularity-hunter; and he incurred in the process a dislike that, in many instances, amounted to positive hatred. But he cared little, though he was well aware that the Government would take revenge upon him at the first opportunity. The opportunity soon came, and I was indirectly responsible for providing it. In France I had been struck by the intensity of the national effort and by the mobilization of every available man. On returning to England, the sight of hundreds of lusty youths loafing about, apparently careless of the war, filled me with shame and anger. Therefore, when I found, among the letters sent for publication to the editor of *The Times*, a letter from a Major Richardson protesting against this very thing, I advised the editor to print it. It was published on May 21, 1915, under the heading "The Need for Compulsion." and ran:

I have recently returned from France, where I have been with the French.

The last of the French reserves are out, and at the present moment young raw recruits are being called up.

The natural consequence of this is that the French are looking to us to supply the enormous number of men still needed to carry the war to anything like a satisfactory conclusion, and that, failing these supplies arriving, there is a distinct danger of public sentiment in France, by the time winter comes, wearying of the war. It is a painful thing to witness reinforcements of young lads in their teens going up to the firing line, as I saw myself last week.

On my way home I saw the mangled mass of humanity after Ypres, and subsequently, when immediately across the channel, I came across scores of lusty, able-bodied young men walking about in smug complacency, utterly callous and indifferent to the anguish of their brothers, so long as they got their war bonus.

A few days earlier the French military authorities had made some complaint to the British Government on the score of the laxity of British censors in allowing the publication in the British press of information likely to be useful to the enemy; and the French Embassy had been requested by the

British War Office to point out any cases in point which might occur in future. Consequently, a large number of newspaper cuttings were forwarded by an official of the French Embassy to the War Office, among them being Major Richardson's letter. Imagining that they had a good case against *The Times*, the British Government resolved to prosecute it by summary procedure under the Defence of the Realm Regulations for "publishing information which might be directly useful to the enemy." The plea was that *The Times* and Major Richardson had given such information to Germany by stating that "the last of the French reserves are out, and at the present moment young raw recruits are being called up." The British Government, which watched the German press closely, was doubtless aware that statements even stronger than this had appeared early in April in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, and had also been made in public debates in the French Chamber. But, in its anxiety to strike a blow at *The Times*, and indirectly at Lord Northcliffe, it seems to have forgotten that we also read the German and the French papers very carefully. To make sure of catching us unawares, the summons against *The Times* was served late on the evening of Saturday May 29th, at an hour when, as the Government was entitled to expect, *The Times* office would be empty; and as the case was to be heard by summary jurisdiction early on the morning of Monday, May 31st, at the Mansion House, it was supposed that we should have no time to prepare a defence. As luck would have it, the former Berlin correspondent of *The Times*, the late Mr. J. E. Mackenzie—who, throughout the war, produced an admirable daily review of the German press called "Through German Eyes"—happened to be working in the office when the summons was served. Grasping its importance and the intention behind it, he took action at once, with the result that enough proof of the previous publication, in France and in Germany, of statements similar to that incriminated, could be put forward to justify the Mansion House Tribunal in granting an adjournment of the case for some days. *The Times* was able also to secure the services of an eminent counsel, Mr. Gordon Hewart (now Lord Hewart,

Lord Chief Justice of England), who more than held his own against the Public Prosecutor. He could not, however, refute the Government's contentions that the prosecution had been undertaken at the instance of the French Military attaché on behalf of the French Embassy and Government, and that the case was being tried in a court of summary jurisdiction by direction of the " competent military authority." By these arguments, the Public Prosecutor sought to throw both the authority of an Allied Government and that of the British Army into the scales of justice against us.

Before the resumption of the trial I asked M. Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador, why he had authorized the prosecution without first making representations to us. I told him that, as a result of inquiries which I had caused to be made in Paris, I knew that the French Government had never known of, or desired, or authorized the prosecution. M. Cambon assured me that he had never known of or authorized it, that he regretted it, and that he had informed the British Foreign Office to this effect. He hoped therefore that the prosecution would be withdrawn. For several days he negotiated with the Government for its withdrawal, dealing especially with Lord Lansdowne who had recently joined the Government as Minister without Portfolio. His efforts were fruitless. The Government thought it had found a sturdy cudgel wherewith to beat *The Times* and Lord Northcliffe, and refused to let it go. All it would do, on the eve of the resumption of the trial, was to promise M. Cambon that, after sentence had been given, the Public Prosecutor should state that the proceedings had not been taken at the request of the French Government or of the French Embassy.

In the meantime, we had collected from the German press and from French parliamentary debates an overwhelming case against the Government. All and much more than the statements made in Major Richardson's letter had been printed in Germany and in France weeks before he wrote it. Consequently, there could be no question of our having given information to the enemy. This I told M. Cambon on the night before the resumption and warned him also that, in my evi-

dence, I should state authoritatively that the French Government had neither known nor approved of the prosecution. When he informed me of the statement which the Public Prosecutor was to make after sentence had been given, I pointed out to him that, if *The Times* were acquitted, the effect of the statement would be to make the French Embassy appear eager to wriggle out of its share of the discredit; and that, if *The Times* were condemned, the French Embassy would look as though it wished to escape from the odium of having procured the condemnation. Then M. Cambon said, "I authorize you to state that the French Government neither desired, knew, nor approved of this prosecution; and you may add that, had I known of it or been consulted about it, I should have protested against it. I know that the only object of *The Times* was to help in winning the war."

Mr. Gordon Hewart used with consummate ability the leverage which this authorization gave him. Instead of calling me as a witness, he recalled the chief witness for the prosecution (a Colonel on the War Office staff) and extracted from him the admission that nothing could be more utterly wrong than the "impression," which this witness had previously given, that the proceedings against *The Times* were instigated by the French Government or the French Embassy. He compelled him also to admit that the "information" contained in Major Richardson's letter could be of no use to the enemy if, as could be proved, the enemy had long possessed it. Seeing that his case was smashed, the Crown Counsel sought to extricate himself from his predicament, but was not allowed by the Court to speak until Mr. Gordon Hewart had soundly trounced the official instigators of the prosecution. The magistrate then dismissed the case as baseless — and the Government got a much-needed lesson.

Of the animus which prompted the action of ministers in this instance, many examples were to be given during the war. Under the Defence of the Realm Regulations — subsequently the Defence of the Realm Act, or DORA, for short — members of the Government and permanent officials alike tended to become autocratic. Parliament grew ineffective and the press

alone acted as the guardian of such public liberties as remained. Handicapped though it was by restrictions of many kinds, it did its part in the winning of the war and in fortifying the spirit of the nation; and it compelled the Government, again and again, to tell the country the truth. Throughout the war, the temper of the people was far sturdier than that of the majority of ministers, most of whom strangely underestimated the national capacity for discipline and self-sacrifice. The "Derby System," conscription, rationing, crushing taxation, air raids, the threat of starvation by German submarines, the progressive loss of hundreds of thousands of lives, were accepted with a dogged calm worthy of the best British traditions; and if credit for the part that England played in the war is to be given to whom it is due, it must be given not to any one statesman or commander but to the common soldier in the field and to the people at home.

CHAPTER XIII

THE THICK OF THE FIGHT
1915–1916

IN the winter of 1915-16, the Allied peoples first began to realize the quality and the size of their task. Though Italy had joined them in May, 1915, after a severe political crisis at Rome, the Italian offensive against Austria had not brought the expected relief. Moreover, the Italian Government made war in a spirit of "*sacro egoismo*," or "hallowed selfishness," as its head, Signor Salandra, defined it, and the Italian press long continued to call the operations against Austria-Hungary "our war," as distinguished from the "war of the Allies." In October, 1915, Bulgaria joined the enemy, while a strong Austro-German offensive overwhelmed Serbia whom the Allies were powerless to help. Of the Serbian retreat with its heroic episodes this is not the place to speak; nor does the fighting against the Turks in the Dardanelles, on the Gallipoli peninsula and in Mesopotamia, come within the scope of my narrative. The Allies had few successes to set off against the victories of the enemy; and the conviction gradually grew that, if defeat were to be avoided, far greater efforts would have to be made. In England, the movement for compulsory military service brought on a compromise in the form of Lord Derby's recruiting scheme; while criticism of General Sir John French led, in December, 1915, to his retirement from the command of the British Expeditionary Force in France and to the appointment of General Sir Douglas Haig to succeed him, General Sir William Robertson becoming Chief of the Imperial General Staff. In France, where the Viviani Cabinet had been replaced by a new administration under M. Briand, General Joffre was definitely appointed Commander-in-Chief with General de Castelnau as his Chief of Staff. The

divergence of opinion upon the relative importance of the Western and the Balkan fronts, which afterwards became acute, was already noticeable in British and French military circles; and pedantic fidelity to the doctrines of Clausewitz, which had misled von Kluck, was beginning to circumscribe the views of the British General Staff. The typescript is for purposes of comparison. The Cabinet, the Foreign Office, the War Office, leading politicians and even journalists were pelted with memoranda and counter-memoranda (some of which came from Staff officers at the front) for and against the retention of Salonika as an Allied base in the Balkans, for and against the evacuation of Gallipoli, and on the political and military situation in general. Upon one of these memoranda, which urged the immediate evacuation of Salonika, an important member of the Cabinet, Mr. Bonar Law, consulted me; and in a letter to him, dater December 2, 1915, I wrote:

Evacuation of Salonika would make a present to Austria and Germany of the best naval and submarine base on the Ægean coast. There is no prespect whatever that the enemy would refrain from using this advantage to the full. Our communications with the Gallipoli peninsula and Egypt, and our freedom of maritime action, should we hereafter find it necessary to bring pressure to bear upon Greece, would be seriously endangered.

. . . The enemy desire nothing so much as to see us depart from Salonika, since the presence of an Allied force there, or in the neighbourhood, would compel the Germans, Austrians, and Bulgarians to maintain a considerable force on a war footing throughout the winter, in order to watch and menace us. By our departure the enemy would be relieved of a dangerous and disquieting element of uncertainty in the Balkan situation; the Greeks, Rumanians, and Albanians would be convinced that we had thrown up the sponge, the chances of disagreement between the Bulgarians and the Turks would be lessened, and the organization of the Balkans in a pro-German sense would proceed apace without serious hindrance.

It is manifestly to our interest to write as large a note of interrogation as possible over the whole Balkan situation during the winter. The strain upon Bulgaria and Turkey will thus be prolonged and friction between them promoted; the Greeks and the Rumanians will not venture to abandon their neutrality in a sense unfavourable to us; and the Albanians will think twice before

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undertaking serious operations against the remnant of the Serbian Army.

In the end it was decided to hold Salonika; but, before the controversy could be settled, Allied plans received a rude shock, in the last week of February, 1916, from a determined German attack upon Verdun. For months this attack and the tenacious French defence absorbed the attention of the Allied peoples, who watched with breathless anxiety the vicissitudes of the struggle.

VERDUN

Good fortune enabled me to see something of its earlier stages. On February 23rd, Lord Northcliffe asked me to go with him on a visit to the French front in Champagne. He had already seen the British front in Flanders but was anxious to judge for himself how far the organization of the French and the work of their artillery were superior to our own. It was arranged that we should leave Southampton on Saturday, February 26th, and report ourselves at French headquarters on March 1st. But, on the afternoon of February 26th, a German bulletin announced that the Fort of Douaumont, described as the key to Verdun, had been captured by a Brandenburg regiment. The fall of Verdun seemed imminent. In the train on the way to Southampton I made the acquaintance of a French officer wearing colonial uniform, Captain Philippe Millet, formerly colonial editor of the Paris *Temps,* and of another French writer, M. Robert de Caix, afterwards French High Commissioner in Syria. At Southampton, Lord Northcliffe decided that it would be useless to go to the Champagne front while the fortunes of the war were perhaps being decided elsewhere, and that we must get leave to go at once to Verdun and report as eyewitnesses upon the truth or falsity of the German claim. Though the French Government forbade the publication of the German military bulletins in France, they were, of course, sent by German wireless throughout the world and were regularly published in the British press. Therefore it was important that so alarming

a bulletin as that which announced the fall of Fort Douaumont should be answered at once.

But an exasperating hitch occurred. German submarines had appeared in the Channel, and the boat which was to have taken us from Southampton to Havre could not start that night. It was crowded to suffocation, some four hundred passengers having been allowed on board a steamer with accommodation for barely two hundred. Next morning we found ourselves still moored to the Southampton wharf. Throughout Sunday, February 27th, it snowed heavily. No one was allowed to go on shore because we might start at any moment. Meanwhile, food threatened to run short. Monday morning found us in the same plight, except that food and drink had run short. Finally, at 6 P.M. that evening, we heard that a cockleshell of a steamer employed in the vegetable trade between Southampton, Cherbourg, and the Channel Islands, was to be allowed to cross the Channel because its shallow draught was thought to render it immune from torpedo attack. Using all the influence we could command, Northcliffe, Millet, de Caix and I, with the valiant wife of a British officer who was due to meet her husband at Malta, obtained permission to tranship and to land at Cherbourg instead of Havre. We started in a gale.

I had never travelled with Northcliffe before, and his cheerfulness and patience under discomfort won my admiration and that of our companions. On the cockleshell there were but three berths left when the only cabin had been given to the lady. He insisted on tossing for them, and, having lost the toss, curled himself up in a mackintosh on a seat. We reached Cherbourg next morning after a tumbly crossing, and were in Paris towards midnight, our journey being delayed by a railway accident. Northcliffe's insistence that we should go to Verdun was not quite to the taste of the French military authorities; but the Prime Minister, M. Briand, quickly saw the advantage of having the position described in a despatch, signed by Northcliffe, which would be offered to the whole British press and to all the American newspapers served by the Associated Press and the United Press agencies. Under

advice from the Government, French General Headquarters assented, and we started from Paris at 5 P.M., on Thursday, March 2nd, in a powerful Staff car. My old friend and colleague, Lieutenant Maurice Pernot, sometime correspondent of the *Journal des Débats* in Vienna and Rome, accompanied us as representative of the French Headquarters Staff. In a blinding snowstorm we made our way to Sézanne, where we slept, and started thence at 6 A.M. on the 3rd with orders to report ourselves at Souilly, General Pétain's Headquarters near Verdun, at 9 A.M. On the way we learned from Pernot something of the story of the German attack. It had taken the local Commander by surprise; and though his first reports to General Headquarters, on the evening of February 21st, were not alarming, the Chief of Staff, General de Castelnau, determined to see matters for himself and ordered his car for 8 o'clock next morning. But, on turning in, he felt more uneasy than the reports seemed to warrant. Therefore he rose again, ordered his car at once, and went at breakneck speed to Verdun, which he reached at daylight — and in the nick of time. Assuming temporary command, he displaced the local Commander and summoned General Pétain from a neighbouring army corps. Pétain took over the defence with orders to hold on at all costs. Since then the battle had raged furiously, the Germans attacking with utter disregard of life and seeking to smother the defenders under a bombardment of which the like had not been seen in the war. What the position would be when we reached Souilly — for Verdun was being heavily shelled and could no longer serve as local headquarters — no man could say. We were naturally eager to get there with all speed, and our good car was bearing us thither at forty-five miles an hour.

A CHECK

But, as we were running through the town of Vitry-le-François towards 7:30 A.M. we heard a sharp click and the car slowed down. The gear of its second speed had snapped, and the car was useless. Pernot telephoned at once to Bar-le-Duc for another car and was assured that it would be sent

immediately. Meanwhile, we breakfasted, expecting the new car to turn up by 9 A.M. Hour after hour passed without a sign of it. On enquiring anew at Bar-le-Duc we were told it had started. Finally, at 3 P.M. we saw a small new car, driven by an obviously tipsy soldier, wobbling along the streets of Vitry. We hailed it and found that it was the car from Bar-le-Duc. The driver had arrived at 11 o'clock but had thought fit to drink heavily before reporting for further service. He was promptly deposed and the driver of the broken-down Staff car installed in his place. Then we started again for Souilly.

About forty miles on we were stopped by a patrol. Strict orders had been issued from Souilly that no civilians were to be allowed on any road to Verdun. We showed our permits and Pernot protested, but in vain. There was nothing for it but to trudge through the snow to the nearest military telephone post and get the order suspended in our favour. By this time it was past 6 o'clock and very dark. We made what speed we could and finally reached Souilly in sleet and rain at 8 P.M. — 11 hours late. On reporting ourselves, we found Pétain's Staff officers up to their eyes in work and obviously annoyed at our unpunctuality. Worse still, there was no chance of getting a bed at Souilly. The place was crammed with soldiers. We were ordered back to Bar-le-Duc, some thirty miles away, and were told to report ourselves again at eight next morning.

By this time we were hungry. We were, besides, damp and cold. There was no question of finding food in the terrible salad of mud, soldiers, artillery, lorries and ambulances at Souilly. Therefore we set out for Bar-le-Duc, only to be stopped by an interminable file of motor lorries bringing supplies, men and munitions to the front. For more than an hour we waited by the roadside while hundreds after hundreds of these great vehicles trundled past with the regularity of well-managed freight trains. Then, at 10 P.M. we resumed our journey. Presently our car "drave heavily." On the sticky roads the motor had heated and refused further service. We had to wait for it to cool, digging snow out of the ditches with

our hands to hasten the process. Once more we started, only to be brought again to a dead stop, a few miles further on, in a village. Requisitioning a pail from a sleepy peasant we doused the motor with water from a pump and finally reached Bar-le-Duc towards midnight. The town was crowded with refugees from Verdun, no rooms were to be had in the hotels or even in private houses and, worse still, there was no food. After a fruitless search we returned to the Hôtel du Commerce in the small hours to beg for shelter and a chair or two on which to pass the remainder of the night. Luckily some officers for whom beds had been reserved had not claimed them and they were given to us; but as we were more hungry than sleepy, we asked for food of some sort. None was to be had. The dining room, which had sheltered 300 refugees from Verdun during the day, with windows closed and shutters down for fear of air raids, was filled with an atmosphere such as I have never tasted before or since. On the floor in a corner I discovered a quarter of a loaf of stale bread, whereat we all gave a feeble cheer. Cleaning it with our pocket knives, we hacked it into six small pieces, one of which each of us ate, while the other three we reserved for "breakfast." A bottle of Vichy water, tempered with brandy from Northcliffe's flask, formed the rest of our meal, though Northcliffe excited the wonder of a heavy-eyed and slatternly maid by anointing his crust with some Worcester sauce which he detected in the recesses of an otherwise empty cupboard. "And so to bed" at 3 A.M.

At 6 A.M. we started back to Souilly, having devoured our remaining crusts with a thimbleful of stale black coffee found in a bottle in the kitchen. It was still snowing and the wind was keen. Though the driver had worked all night on the motor, the wretched thing finally gave up the ghost ten miles from our destination. Pernot was in despair and Northcliffe furious. As the driver was finally explaining that there was nothing more to be done, I saw a military lorry heading straight towards us in the direction of Souilly. Standing in the middle of the road I signalled to it to stop. It was laden with broken stones to mend the road beyond Souilly; and after

hearing our story the driver consented to take us on. We left our car by the roadside. Northcliffe was given the seat of honour on the lorry beside the driver — whom he soon recognized as an old acquaintance, the proprietor of a garage at Biarritz — while Pernot and I sat on petrol tins amid the broken stones behind. In reality, we had the best of the bargain for, in his more exposed position, Northcliffe caught a chill. Thus we reached Souilly at 9 A.M. only an hour late this time, but still late enough to make Pétain's staff wonder whether we were not demons of unpunctuality incarnate.

GERMAN PRISONERS

Still it snowed and sleeted. There could be no question of seeing any part of the battlefield until the weather improved. Meanwhile, a Staff officer gave me all available information, drew me a rough map of the positions, explained the German order of battle as far as it was known, and allowed me to take notes. News then came that a batch of German prisoners had been brought in from Douaumont, mostly Brandenburgers, and we were asked if we should like to inspect them. We trudged through the mud to a shanty where they were being examined by a French interpreter, a gentle, erudite officer who, in his civilian days, had been a professor of some sort of German at some French University or High School. I stood beside him as he questioned the prisoners [who were brought in one at a time] literally in the language of Goethe which the hulking Brandenburgers either did not or would not understand. One of them stood, moreover, in so contemptuous an attitude, with his hands in his trouser pockets, that I expressed surprise to Pernot that such behavior should be tolerated; and the interpreter asked me whether I wished to question the prisoner. "Yes," I said, "but I will not speak to a German soldier who does not stand to attention before an officer." The interpreter then said to the prisoner, in perfectly good but quite unmilitary German, "*Stellen Sie sich gerade!*" (Hold yourself straight) — at which the Brandenburger scornfully pulled himself together. This was too much for me, and I barked at him,

with the best imitation of military Prussian that I could remember from my Berlin days and from the Reuter trial at Strasburg, "*Hab' Acht! Kerl!*"

The effect was electrical. The man jumped to attention and saluted. Then, for a few minutes, I cursed him in Prussian as a German officer would have cursed him, and ordered him to answer promptly lest something unpleasant happen to him. He soon told us all he knew of the German military dispositions; as did other of his comrades at whom I barked successively. In an interval between the barkings, the French military interpreter said to Pernot in an undertone, "Ought prisoners of war to be talked to in this way? It seems to me very brutal." "Don't you understand that this is the tone they are accustomed to?" I replied. "They are homesick for it; they feel lonesome without it." But presently my method broke down. A rather undersized prisoner was brought in upon whom my hectoring had no effect. He stood to attention but seemed to resent being bullied. In a tone very different from that of the Brandenburgers he said he was a Bavarian.

I gave him a cigar and told him to sit down. Tactics that worked with Prussians were unsuited to South Germans. Though I spoke no Bavarian, an amalgam of Upper Austrian and Viennese might serve. It did serve. The prisoner soon beamed with pleasure and told us all he knew. He also talked volubly about his wife and children, related their difficulties in trying to live on an allowance of five marks a day, complained of the cooking in the trenches and made himself generally agreeable. Other Prussian prisoners I treated by the original method until one youth of seventeen, a Berliner, failed to respond to it. He had joined as a volunteer from the Charlottenburg Technical High School while still under age, and was full of independence and idealism. He proved amenable to courtesy, wished to argue about the rights and wrongs of the war, and he held his own as well as any officer could have done.

Northcliffe was an amused spectator of my interviews with the prisoners. "I wonder who the dickens they thought you

were," he said afterwards. "Anything less military than your appearance I cannot imagine. You look like a cross between a chauffeur and a bumboat woman." Indeed, we both cut strange figures, with waterproofs buttoned over fur coats, waterproof caps, and our feet encased in snow boots. We were also sleepy and hungry. But sleep and hunger were alike forgotten when the weather cleared somewhat and we were able to motor out to a point commanding a view of the Verdun ridges and of the Woevre beyond the Meuse. In a valley below us French field and heavy batteries were hidden, and were searching, by indirect fire, the German lines beyond the next ridge. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of guns were in action. German observation must have been good; for again and again shells would burst, as it seemed to us, just above the French batteries which, though carefully concealed, betrayed their whereabouts by tongues of flame that pierced the misty atmosphere as they fired. We saw French field batteries shift their positions rapidly and take new cover; but within a few seconds of their first discharge, German shells would drop in their immediate neighbourhood. With the help of the maps and of the explanations of Staff officers we were able to gain a good idea of the situation; and, as we returned, leaving Verdun on the left, we felt that, whatever the strength of the German attack, the task of driving out the French would be hard and costly indeed.

PÉTAIN OF VERDUN

In the early afternoon General Pétain gave us luncheon at Souilly. By then, we were ravenous. Except two small crusts of bread, we had eaten nothing for twenty-eight hours. In welcoming us, Pétain began conversation with Northcliffe, who was too tired or too hungry to understand rapid French. Then, in a few sentences, he gave me his view of the outlook. "Can you stop them, General?" I asked indiscreetly. He paused a moment and answered, "When a modern army has had twenty-four hours to entrench itself in good positions, the chances of successful attack are much diminished.

We had forty-eight hours. Besides, positions are being prepared on every ridge as far back as Bar-le-Duc. If they get through I shall want to know why."

Then the appearance of food silenced all talk. It was an immense dish of choucroute — a refined version of German Sauerkraut — with sausages. How much Pétain and his officers got of it I did not observe, but I know that Northcliffe and I made a great hole in the savoury mound. So voracious were we that the arrival of an elderly officer with a pointed white beard escaped me. He took his place quietly at the table, opposite Pétain. Even had I seen him I should not have known that he was General Herr who had been in command of the local defences before Pétain took over. With unconscious tactlessness I said presently to Pétain, "But, General, surely this German attack must have been foreseen." Pétain's blue eye looked more than usually steely as he answered metallically. "Yes, it was foreseen; only the local command did not believe in it."

This thrust roused General Herr, who expostulated:

"But those fellows [the Germans] spin railways as spiders spin their webs. There had been a fog for six weeks. We could hear their locomotives whistling but we had nothing else to guide us until the attack came. How could we know what they were about?"

Pétain shrugged his shoulders and the luncheon ended in silence. Northcliffe and I started at once for Paris in another Staff car that had been sent to replace the vehicle which had left us in the lurch. From 3 until 11 P.M. we motored steadily through the snow, bursting two tires on the Plain of Châlons, and reaching Paris more than drowsy. Then, with characteristic decision, Northcliffe said, "Now, no supper, or we shall both fall asleep. We must turn out that despatch." We procured two volunteer secretaries and each of us dictated steadily until 2:30 A.M., the military part of the work being entrusted to me while Northcliffe did the "atmosphere." Then he appeared in my room with his manuscript, asking me to revise and incorporate it in my own since he felt unable to continue. The chill he had caught

on the lorry between Bar-le-Duc and Souilly had developed so violently that he could scarcely speak or see. At 5 A.M. the despatch was ready and I took it to Lieutenant Pernot, who was sleeping in an adjacent room, woke him up and agreed that he should go with it at once to Headquarters at Chantilly, get the military censor to pass it and return with it by midday for submission to the political censor. Then I, too, went to bed with the intention of sleeping till midday, for I had to lecture that afternoon on the "Effort of England" to an audience of 2000 Frenchmen. But the worthy pastor who was the chief organizer of the *Foi et Vie* lectures had become so anxious at my absence from Paris that he burst into my room at 9 A.M. to make sure that I was there. I could have slain him, for he had effectually cut short my slumbers. When Pernot returned from Chantilly the political censor could not be found, and not until 3 P.M. could we discover him. Then he insisted that the conclusion of the despatch must be changed. We had refrained from predicting the issue of the struggle and the censor felt that something more reassuring was required. Therefore I wrote a fresh conclusion in the following words which were based upon Pétain's own statement:

> Verdun is unlikely to be taken. Nothing justifies a belief that the spirit and the stamina of the German forces are equal to the task of dislodging the French from their present formidable positions.

With this change, the despatch was telegraphed. There were some six thousand words of it. It appeared in the whole British and American press next morning, Monday, March 6th, and effectively destroyed the influence of the German war bulletins. But when Northcliffe saw the new conclusion in print he was filled with dismay. "I never prophesy," he declared, "and this conclusion implies a prophecy." He actually telegraphed a correction next day to *The Times*. Later in the year, when he republished the gist of the despatch in his book, "At the War," he adhered, however, to my improvised conclusion.

A MAGNETIC ATMOSPHERE

Nothing surprised me more during the rush to Verdun and back than Northcliffe's physical stamina. Though not an exceptionally strong man, he had borne exceptional strain and fatigue, with little sleep and less food, from the Thursday afternoon until 2:30 A.M. on Sunday, his mind being constantly on the alert and his pencil continually jotting down impressions in his notebook. No better companion in an adventure could be desired. But I noticed also that his mind worked curiously. We both saw the same things; but I saw them in a matter-of-fact way while he saw and recorded them, unconsciously I believe, in a form which the public would most readily understand. His impressions were received through a medium which might be called the public eye in miniature. His mind was wholly governed by an intense determination to help in winning the war, and all his observations were, in a sense, automatically censored by this resolve. He was remarkably, sometimes uncannily, intuitive, and very sensitive to atmosphere. He caught, as I caught in a minor degree, the exhilaration of the defenders of Verdun. The whole region seemed to vibrate with magnetism; and it was doubtless this magnetism that helped us to do what we did.

FACING THE MUSIC

Its effect upon me did not wear off for weeks; and, on the afternoon of Sunday, March 5th, it pulled me through an ordeal which I might not otherwise have faced with success. After the Northcliffe despatch had been telegraphed, I snatched a hasty meal and went, at 5 P.M., to give my lecture. The hall was packed. The whole audience was throbbing with excitement about Verdun. My old friend, Victor Bérard, who presided, also showed it in his introductory remarks, and I felt that it would be an anti-climax or worse, to speak forthwith of the British war effort. Therefore I spoke of Verdun and was loudly cheered. But, as I approached my appointed subject, the temper of my hearers grew cold and almost hos-

tile. The more I described what was being done to prepare the armies of the Empire to bear their full share in the struggle, the more keenly did I feel that my audience was against me and that they were wondering why the British armies were doing nothing to relieve the pressure on Verdun. Therefore I broke off and said:

At the bottom of your hearts there is an unworthy suspicion. You are asking yourselves whether this British effort has not been a little slow. You are thinking that, while the other Allies mobilized immediately all their reserves, put millions of soldiers into the fighting line, stopped their economic life, it is only now that the British military effort is beginning to make itself really felt. You are reflecting that while England perfects her new armies, builds new munition factories, and introduces a limited form of compulsory service, her Allies are dying and being ruined. You wonder whether, in all this, there is not a selfish calculation on the part of "perfidious Albion." You suspect that she may wish to find herself, when peace is made, the strongest of the Allies in order to get the biggest part of the loot or to impose upon the enemy conditions more advantageous to herself than to the other Allies.

Here the whole audience rose and applauded as though to confess that I had read their thoughts. I saw that the bull must be taken by the horns, and continued, not without a touch of scorn:

Since you are French, I admit that you should ask yourselves these questions. Had I not lived a great part of my life outside England I should, however, look upon such questions as so many insults to the honour of my country and should turn my back upon you and go away. But as I know the difficulty felt by foreigners in understanding English psychology; as I know that, for Frenchmen, a logical explanation of political phenomena is almost a physical necessity, I will bear with you and try to give a logical answer. So far is England from being actuated by selfish motives, that she has sacrificed, voluntarily, for the sake of this war all the liberties she has won throughout the centuries. She has spent, and is spending, money without counting. She, a non-military nation, has already mobilized and sacrificed, or is preparing to sacrifice, the flower of her manhood. She is holding the seas and keeping open for the Allies the maritime routes of the world. All this she is doing, not consciously for herself but for the cause. Her people, so slow-minded are they, do not yet realize

that they are fighting for themselves; so obtuse are they that they still think they are fighting for Belgium and for France.

There was silence for a moment and then an outburst of applause that shook the roof. After that, the rest was easy. But I shall not easily forget the tension of those few moments or the lesson it taught me.

A PROGRAMME FOR PEACE

This lecture, which was afterward printed, in an expurgated form, and disseminated throughout France by the French Government, I repeated presently at Besançon and at Lyons where I found much the same disposition and counteracted it with much the same effect as in Paris. But, immediately after the Paris lecture, I went with Northcliffe to the Champagne front, visited Rheims and the Bétheny position, saw the effects of German gas attacks, discussed the war with General Franchet d'Espérey and General Gouraud, had a first experience — that I did not enjoy — of being shelled by German field guns, and travelled for some yards in an overturned car which the driver's eagerness to pass an exposed point at sixty miles an hour had landed in a morass of half-frozen mud. But these, and other " thrills " incidental to an amateur war correspondentship, would have been almost gratifying had not the sight of war made upon me an abiding impression of horror. I came back persuaded that, if the war were truly worth while, it could only be because it was a war to end war. Real victory could only be victory over war itself, and must be enshrined in such a peace as to make further war impossible. The Allies believed themselves to be fighting for such a victory; but had they a clear vision of what victory must mean, had they a programme for peace? The more I thought, the plainer it seemed that they had none and that it was of the utmost importance to make a programme. Therefore I suggested to the editor that *The Times* should take in hand the formulation of a peace programme or, in other words, a definition of " victory." Otherwise, I urged, the work might

not be done until too late, and the cessation of hostilities might find the Allied peoples as unprepared for peace as they had been unready for war.

My suggestion was not accepted. The objection was raised that to talk of peace, in the spring of 1916, when the war was not only not won but seemed farther than ever from being won, would turn public attention away from the main business of winning it towards consideration of hypothetical terms of peace. It would be impolitic and perhaps dangerous for a great journal like *The Times*, which had advocated and was advocating the prosecution of the war with the utmost vigour, to seem to be harbouring thoughts of peace. I felt the force of this objection while not agreeing with it, and said that, if the work of educating the public to a true conception of victory could not be done by or through *The Times*, I should start it elsewhere under my own name and on my own responsibility. This was agreed to. Consequently, with the assent of its editor, Mr. Harold Cox, I wrote for the *Edinburgh Review* of April, 1916, an article called "A Programme for Peace," which served to stimulate thought and discussion in England; and though the French Government declined to sanction its publication in France, no fewer than five manuscript translations were spontaneously made there by persons unknown to me. Its main passage ran:

> This war is essentially a war of peoples, not of kings or dictators. But no people can act efficiently without some crystallization of its ideas, some canalization of its political instincts. Those who have given thought to the matter should therefore put forward their conceptions of the practical objects to be attained by the war, if only in the hope of provoking a discussion that may help to clear up obscure points and to further the acceptance of a general programme. In this hope I venture tentatively to draw up a list of what seem to me the essential postulates of a lasting peace.
>
> (1) That the Allies win the war so thoroughly as to be able to dictate their terms. An inconclusive peace, following upon even a victorious war, would be but a prelude to a fresh period of armaments and of preparation for a struggle still more cruel.
>
> (2) That, as a preliminary step to the winning of the war, the British people entrust its management to a few men filled with the war spirit and determined to conquer, literally, at all costs.

(3) That the coördination of Allied effort, and particularly of Franco-British effort, be carried much farther than it has hitherto been. To this end the British forces in France should be regarded as an integral part of the French Army, and should receive orders, not merely suggestions or advice, from the French Commander-in-Chief and his Chief of Staff. Just as the French Navy is, in practice, subordinate to the British Navy, so the British Army, with its reserves and resources, should be effectively subordinate to the French Army which, in the conduct of a Continental War, is at least as superior to our Army as the British Navy is superior to the French Navy.

(4) That, as soon as a Government for War shall have been formed in Great Britain, a policy of economic alliance between the various parts of the Empire, with the help of statesmen from Over-sea Dominions, shall be drafted on broad lines.

(5) That this policy having been formulated and adopted in principle, the British Empire, as a whole, shall concert with its Allies a scheme for economic defence against Germany and her allies both during and after the war. The objects of this scheme would be:

(a) to tighten the "blockade" of Germany;

(b) to convince Germany and her allies that the longer they continue the struggle the more complete will be their economic ruin, and the more protracted the period of economic servitude through which they must pass until they have fully indemnified those of the Allies who have most suffered from Germany's action;

(c) to establish, as a settled principle of Allied Policy that, until these indemnities have been fully paid, the British and Allied Navies will not recognize the German or any enemy flag upon the high seas; and that the Allies will exact such additional guarantees of the payment of these indemnities, by occupation of territory or otherwise, as may be deemed essential.

(6) That, simultaneously with the formulation of an Allied economic policy, there shall be taken in hand the establishment of a definite scheme of European reconstruction, territorial and political, such a scheme to include:

(a) The restoration of Alsace-Lorraine to France;

(b) The adjustment of Belgian territory in accordance with Belgian requirements;

(c) The constitution of an ethnically complete Serbia in the form of a United States of Yugoslavia;

(d) The constitution of a united self-governing Poland under the Russian sceptre.

(e) The constitution of an independent or, at least, autonomous Bohemia, including Moravia and the Slovak country of North-western Hungary;

(f) The allotment to Rumania of the Rumane regions of Hungary and the Bukovina, provided that Rumania shall have helped effectively to liberate those regions from Hungarian and Austrian rule;

(g) The establishment of the freedom of the Bosphorus and of the Dardanelles to shipping, after Russia has secured, or has been given, possession of Constantinople.

(h) The completion of Italian unity by the inclusion within the frontiers of the kingdom of Italy of all Italian districts in the Trentino and the Carnic Alps, on the Triestine littoral and the Istrian coast; the establishment of Italian naval control in the Adriatic by the possession of Pola, Lissa, and Valona. . . .

We do not know in what form proposals for peace will be made. The first proposal may be for an armistice, during which conditions would be debated. Such an armistice would oblige the Allies to keep their millions of men mobilized, ready to resume hostilities should negotiations break down. The longer the armistice and the more protracted the negotiations, the more irksome would be the state of armed inactivity to the men in the field, and the keener the desire for a rapid settlement that would restore them to their civil occupations and relieve the burden upon taxpayers. In these circumstances, the tendency to compromise upon essential points might become too strong for any Allied Government to withstand. Germany, we may be sure, will seek to exploit these possibilities. It behoves us, therefore, to guard against them in advance.

The best means of guarding against them is the formulation of a clear-cut minimum programme which must be accepted by the enemy before any armistice can be conceded. . . .

There is yet another and final argument in favour of the formulation of a minimum peace programme by the Allies before peace negotiations begin. The reconstruction of Europe will be a hard task. Were the work to be left entirely to a diplomatic congress sitting in secret after the strain of war has passed away, the Allied peoples, to whose determination and self-sacrifice victory will have been due, might find themselves confronted with a series of accomplished facts hardly differing in quality from the grotesque abominations perpetrated by the Congress of Vienna. . . .

It is necessary, therefore, that the broad conditions of a European settlement should be discussed and agreed upon in advance by groups of competent persons in the Allied countries. It should be the task of these groups to explain to the public the bearings of the various questions awaiting solution, and to create a sound public opinion which may compel governments to "run straight." However disheartening it may be that democratic governments should in this war have proved, on the whole, so inferior to their task of

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leadership and so incapable of rising above personal or party conceptions; however roundabout, slow, and uneconomical may be the method of driving a government, by pressure of public opinion, to do the duty it ought to have done spontaneously, there is at least this compensation, that in future we shall not be saddled with pseudo-dictators who might prove as incompetent for the tasks of peace as are our lawyers and other political hacks for the tasks of war.

Groups of competent persons are now being formed in the principal Allied countries; these groups will endeavour to keep in close touch with each other, so that their influence upon the public opinion and, through public opinion, their pressure upon the governments of their respective countries, may be concordant and simultaneous.

In the course of this article — which, it should be remembered, was written in March, 1916 — I reiterated a plea I had already put forward in the *Edinburgh Review* of October, 1915, for the radical transformation of Austria-Hungary as an essential condition of any lasting peace; and, after explaining the danger of merely granting territorial "compensation" to Serbia instead of uniting with her the Southern Slav provinces of Austria-Hungary on a basis of equality, I advocated the creation of a "united Bohemian-Moravian-Slovak" State that would stretch from the Saxon border to the Danube at Pressburg. With the question of Polish independence, it was then — a year before the Russian revolution — impossible to deal without reference to Russia. The terms of that special problem were radically modified before the end of the war. But on rereading my "programme" to-day I still think it formed an adequate point of departure for the movement of opinion which I wished to foster.

THE CZECHO-SLOVAKS AND THE YUGOSLAVS

Naturally, the views I expressed were not mine alone. During the spring and summer of 1915, Masaryk, Supilo and Trumbitch were in London, while Dr. Beneš, Masaryk's right-hand man, had also found his way thither in the autumn. Before the war, Beneš had been a lecturer on Sociology at the Czech University of Prague. When, in the autumn of 1914, Masaryk managed to go to Rome, Beneš

stayed behind and organized a secret intelligence service that kept Masaryk informed. Subsequently, at the risk of his life, Beneš escaped into Switzerland, where he joined Masaryk and thereafter remained with him in exile. Madame Beneš was arrested at Prague, as Masaryk's eldest daughter, Alice, had been. These ladies bore imprisonment as part of their contribution to the national cause. Harder to bear were the tactics of the Austrian prison authorities who played with them as cats with mice, telling them one day that sentence of death would be executed on the morrow, announcing at the last moment a postponement, only to repeat the torture at intervals. The health of Madame Masaryk was permanently impaired, that of Madame Beneš suffered severely, and the life of Miss Alice Masaryk was saved only by an agitation in the United States which induced the American Government to intervene on her behalf. Some of the unfortunate Southern Slav members of the Austrian Parliament who were unable to escape were treated even more cruelly. Dr. Smodlaka, the popular Dalmatian leader and one of the most erudite men in Austria, was thrown into prison, while his wife and family were sent to a Concentration camp. To him, reports of the sufferings and illness of his wife and children were daily given, while to them his impending execution was periodically announced.

MASARYK AND BENEŠ

Masaryk I had long admired; but not until I saw him during the ordeal of those years did I realize the full strength of his moral character. His home had been everything to him. A model husband and father, he was tenderly attached to his wife (an American lady) and to his children. The threat that they would be executed, unless he returned to Austria, was kept constantly hanging over him. The choice between death upon an Austrian gallows in the hope of saving those whom he loved, and of staying abroad, in the knowledge that his work for the national cause might mean their death, was as hard as any ever offered to a sensitive, high-minded

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man. He seldom spoke of this daily torment even to his most intimate friends; but I can still see him standing one day in my study when a paragraph in the newspapers announced the approaching execution of his daughter. He then said simply: "Before a man does what I am doing he has to count the whole cost to himself and others. I have counted the cost and must bear whatever befalls. I feel that my first duty is to the nation."

Beneš faced his ordeal with equal heroism. When Masaryk first brought him to me in December, 1915, he was still a typical young professor of an Austrian University, speaking little French or English but fluent in German. Hermann Bahr, the Austrian-German writer, once said that, in Germany and German Austria, "culture" had become crystallized and that, in order to find German "culture" at its best, it was necessary to know the Austrian Slavs. They had taken it up at the point where the Germans embalmed it, had breathed into it new life and had carried it forward. This saying was exemplified in Beneš as well as in Masaryk, though Masaryk was the philosopher, with a broad, universal view of things, whereas Beneš was his faithful disciple and practical helper. In the early months of his exile, Beneš was essentially a Central European with an Austrian cast of mind. The expansion and the gradual "westernizing" of Beneš, his rapid assimilation of the Allied standpoint and the quick adjustment to it of his earlier views and tendencies, were among the most interesting mental phenomena I have ever observed. He made Paris his headquarters, while Masaryk stayed mainly in London until the Russian Revolution early in 1917, when Masaryk went to Russia to lead the Czecho-Slovaks there and to organize their legion. On his departure, the organization of the movement and the administration of the Czech National Fund, which was raised chiefly by the Czechs in the United States, were mainly in the hands of Beneš, who was frequently called to London. In those days the route from Havre to Southampton was alone open to civilians; and Beneš, who was invariably sea-sick, hated the journey which the British police thought right to make as unpleasant for him as possible.

Yet Beneš, whom I saw whenever he came, never complained; and I might not have known of his difficulties had not a Scotland Yard Inspector, attached to the British Passport office at Havre, taken me aside in January, 1917, and whispered:

"Do you know anything about a fellow who calls himself Beenees, sir? We don't like him. We know he is an Austrian, yet he comes through here, from time to time, with a Serbian passport. How can an Austrian be a Serbian? He is very mysterious and we have put a black mark against him. Whenever he turns up, though his papers seem to be in order, we run him in for a bit, so as to make him miss his boat. But we have not yet been able to catch him out."

I felt it would be hopeless to explain to this worthy detective the intricacies of Austrian politics, and how an "Austrian" might be in possession of a Serbian passport. So I said:

"My dear Inspector, Beenees is a very important man. He is a friend of mine and is straight as a die. You had better not run him in any more. Before very long, that fellow may be signing passports which you will have to respect; and then he may tell our Government that a certain Scotland Yard Inspector at Havre is a nuisance and ought to be removed. So treat him kindly."

Thereafter, "Beenees" suffered no more, in a British "quod" at Havre, from seasickness deferred. He became friends with the vigilant Inspector, whom he rather admired for taking no risks in the case of suspected enemy aliens. Indeed, none of us were quite free at that time from the attentions of the police, however well known we might be to the authorities at Scotland Yard. Seton-Watson once spent a lurid forty-eight hours in saving Masaryk from arrest at Hampstead, though Masaryk was then in frequent consultation with the Foreign Office; and Supilo got into serious trouble by trying to call upon Sir Edward Grey in Northumberland; I also roused the suspicions of a local London detective. He had got it into his head that I was "something foreign" and would not accept my asseverations to the contrary. Not even the production of my birth certificate, showing that I

was a born East Anglian, availed to convince him. As it happened, my passport required renewal and could not be produced for some days. When I received it and showed it to the detective, he exclaimed triumphantly, on seeing me described as "Foreign Editor of *The Times*," "There it is in black and white. I knew you were something foreign." Then I thought it time to ask Scotland Yard to call their zealous servant to order.

In June, 1916, Northcliffe visited the British front and stayed at Headquarters with General Sir Douglas Haig who was then completing his preparations for the great British offensive on the Somme which was to begin on July 1st. By that time, there were 660,000 British troops in the line or in reserve. From this first offensive of the new armies, which had at length been supplied with what were thought to be an adequate number of guns and plenty of munitions, great things were hoped. General Joffre, whom I had seen again at Chantilly in March, had spoken of it with joyful anticipation. He agreed entirely with Sir Douglas Haig that it would have been shortsighted to detach divisions from the new British armies to reinforce the French at Verdun. But, unfortunately, British artillerymen were not then by any means as expert as they afterwards became; and, soon after the beginning of the Somme battle, Sir Douglas Haig had the wisdom to ask for the loan of some scores of French artillery officers to teach our men the niceties of curtain fire and of artillery concentration. Upon the glories and disappointments of the Somme fighting in July, 1916, I shall not expatiate. They belong to military history.

THE ITALIAN FRONT

When the first offensive on the Somme had spent itself, Northcliffe accepted an invitation to visit the Italian front and asked me to accompany him. We started from Paris and went straight through to Udine, then Italian General Headquarters. Italian preparations for a determined offensive against Austria had just been completed, after having

been delayed by an unexpected Austrian attack in the Trentino, or Southern Tyrol, towards the middle of May. Unknown to the Italians, the Austrians had concentrated a strong striking force in the valley of the Upper Adige and might have succeeded in breaking through the Italian defences and reaching the plains in the neighbourhood of Vicenza had not a fortunate circumstance given General Cadorna, the Italian Commander-in-Chief, knowledge of their concentration in the nick of time. A young Slovak astronomer, named Štefanik, who had been working for some years at the Paris Observatory and had been studying the currents of the upper air both theoretically and as a practical aviator, had joined the French Army on the outbreak of war and had distinguished himself as a pilot. In 1915 he was sent to Serbia and, though badly hurt during the Serbian retreat, he applied, in the spring of 1916, for permission to serve on the Italian front, where he proposed to fly over Austrian positions held by Czech troops and to drop among them Czech proclamations in the name of Masaryk. According to Italian military intelligence, the two Czech divisions were then stationed in the Upper Adige valley. Štefanik, who possessed remarkable eyesight, hoped to discover them; but, on reaching his objective, he noticed not two but a dozen Austrian divisions concentrated there, with strong artillery and obviously on the eve of an offensive. He flew back at once to Italian headquarters and reported his discovery. The Austrian offensive began before adequate measures could be taken, but Cadorna was able to hurry up reinforcements and to check the Austrians on the very edge of the Asiago high plateau, within sight of Vicenza. Though the danger was thus averted, Cadorna, for reasons of his own, still kept a large concentration of troops and artillery in the region.

When Northcliffe and I reached Udine, Cadorna had just executed one of the most brilliant manœuvres of the war. Choosing as his immediate objective the Gorizia bridgehead on the river Isonzo, he transferred his whole force swiftly and secretly from the neighbourhood of Vicenza to the Isonzo, and unexpectedly struck at the Austrian defences. In a few

hours the key positions were carried, the Isonzo crossed, and Gorizia taken, the fall of this important town having been facilitated by the action of a Southern Slav officer, Colonel Turudjija, who came over to the Italians and revealed the Austrian positions in the hope of helping the Allied cause and of promoting the creation of a united Southern Slav State, or Yugoslavia.

On hearing that Gorizia had fallen, we determined to follow the Italian troops into the city. Official permission was not given, nor was it absolutely refused. An elderly Italian Colonel was attached to us with instructions to keep us out of danger; but by the time our car had deposited us in the ruined village of Lucinico, a mile or two west of the Isonzo, we told him that we were going on foot to Gorizia. We trudged through the heat and the dust towards the Isonzo, across a battlefield strewn with the débris of war. Austrian shrapnel was still bursting at intervals over the main Isonzo bridge which pioneers were hastily mending. But, as fast as they mended one hole, the Austrian shells made others. We reached the bridge under cover of the high embankment upon which its western end rests, and were preparing to make a dash across the bridge itself when a strange, lanky figure, dressed in khaki with a sun helmet and dark goggles, stopped me and said in English, " What on earth are you doing here? " When he had removed his goggles, I recognized him as George Trevelyan, the historian of Garibaldi, brother of Charles Trevelyan who had left the Government with Morley and John Burns on the outbreak of war. He, too, had conscientious scruples about the war, but none about risking his own life in caring for the wounded. Consequently, he had gone to the Italian front in charge of a British Red Cross unit, and was at that moment trying to get his ambulances across the bridge into Gorizia. In so " unhealthy " a spot our conversation was as short as it was cordial. Trevelyan hurried away to his base, got his ambulances over that night under shell fire, and brought back his wounded in triumph. There was not a braver Englishman on the whole Allied front, and he was presently decorated for valour by the Italians for rescuing

wounded men under fire; but I wonder whether Italians or any other foreigners will ever understand the scruples of men like him, though they form an essential ingredient of many of the best English characters.

Gorizia, with its strong proportion of Slav inhabitants and its signboards in German as well as in Italian, seemed strangely familiar to me. There was an unmistakably Austrian stamp on the place. We inspected the city, which had suffered little, recrossed the Isonzo, not without attentions from Austrian gunners, and visited the Monte Sabotino, the fortified Austrian position which the Italians had carried on August 6th. Here the sights and sounds and smells of war were almost overpowering in the great heat. Among them I remember the phenomenon that, in the clear air, the big Italian shells were visible for a mile or more of their journey towards the enemy.

Excursions on following days took us to the front line of the rocky Carso, or Karst, the arid limestone plateau that runs from the Isonzo along the Adriatic to Istria. Here the Italians had gained much ground despite the terrible heat and the difficulty of bringing up water and supplies. By chance I met Captain Giovanni Visconti Venosta, the younger son of my old friend, whom I had last seen as a youth in his early teens at his father's château in the Valtellina before I had left Italy for Austria in 1902. He was returning with a handful of men from a daring reconnaissance into the village of Oppacchiasella of which he had held one end while the Austrians held the other, and had managed to hold on until the enemy were driven out. The conditions on the Carso had to be seen and felt to be realized. On the waterless limestone, empty cartridge cases became so hot that they burned my fingers as I picked them up. The trenches were blasted out of the solid rock and the wire entanglements fixed to iron stanchions for which holes had been drilled. Between the Italian and the Austrian barbed wire I saw a gruesome sight. From a distance it looked like a kneeling ape, but proved, on closer examination, to be the desiccated body of an Italian soldier who had volunteered to reconnoitre the enemy defences

and had been shot when crawling towards them. As neither side could bring him in, his body had been dried by the heat and had remained in the posture in which he had fallen.

KING VICTOR EMMANUEL

After the disaster of Caporetto in October, 1917, it became the fashion to decry the abilities of General Cadorna and the work of the Italian Army under his command. All I can say is that he struck both Northcliffe and me as very much of a man and certainly not inferior in mental or moral calibre to any of the Allied Commanders whom we had met. We were also impressed by the King of Italy whom I had not met before, though I had watched, with a critical eye, the first few years of his reign. His headquarters were in a small villa near the front, and he spent much of his time in the trenches. To a suggestion that he should come to England he objected vigorously saying, in English, that he was "not good at the representative business" and that he could not make speeches.

"You may tell Lord Northcliffe that, Sir," I remarked, "but you must not say it to me, for I heard you deliver your first Speech from the Throne on August 11, 1900. Not many orators could have said, 'Unafraid and sure, I ascend the Throne' as you said it, or have delivered the rest of the speech in a tone like your Majesty's."

As I quoted these words and another passage from the speech in Italian, the King asked quickly, also in Italian, "Where did you learn that? Did you get it up for the occasion?"

"No, Sir," I answered, "but I heard you make the speech sixteen years ago."

"You are a terrible fellow," he said. "You must have a memory like a phonograph. What I meant was that I am not like the German Emperor. He always knows what to say. If his car breaks down in a village, he is certain to pull out the name of the famous violinist who died or that of the

mediæval painter who was born there. I am a very poor hand at that trade."

The ice having thus been broken, the King spoke freely. We had expected a few minutes' audience; but more than an hour passed before the arrival of a general from the front put an end to a frank discussion of the war and of Italy's part in it. The King showed himself much wiser than his Government. He understood the war in all its implications and was fully alive to the importance of the Southern Slav question, though the expression of his views was strictly constitutional. But in speaking of his soldiers he waxed eloquent and talked without reserve.

After visiting the camps of Austrian prisoners, from some of whom I was able to glean valuable information about conditions in Austria, Northcliffe and I set out for Cortina d'Ampezzo and the Italian front in the direction of the Pustertal. I knew this part of the country well and could hardly realize that it was no longer Austrian. One morning, on waking in a room of the Hotel zur Post at Cortina, the German notices on the walls and the typical Austrian furniture made me forget all that had happened since I had last been there in 1912. But when I went in search of an acquaintance who had lived in the village, he could not be found, and I learned from the Italian Commander that he had been killed the day before our arrival by one of the heavy shells which the Austrians were still firing from long range into the place.

NORTHCLIFFE IN VENICE

From the region of Cortina, where the Italians had placed field guns on apparently inaccessible peaks and had organized a system of military acrobatics that bore astounding witness to their ingenuity, we went through Belluno to Vicenza and on to the Asiago high plateau. By a singular chance, the Italian Commander at Vicenza occupied the villa of Antonio Fogazzaro, the famous Italian writer, whom I had visited there in 1912, and I wondered what Fogazzaro would have thought of the war which had revived in Italian hearts the

emotions of his "Piccolo Mondo Antico" and which was sweeping away his "Piccolo Mondo Moderno." But for musing there was little leisure. I soon found that, if Northcliffe were to stand the strain of campaigning day after day from dawn till eve, and to produce despatches that would be creditable to him and to *The Times*, he would have to be carefully nursed. Therefore I made him go to bed at 9 P.M., jotted down his observations and spent the greater part of each night in writing the despatch myself so that it should be ready for the censor at 6 A.M. before the next day's campaigning began. When we had finished our tour I was thoroughly weary; and as we had forty-eight hours' grace before keeping an appointment with Sonnino in Rome, I suggested that we should spend a day in Venice. Northcliffe demurred. His conception of Venice was that of a toy playground for tourists. He had never been there because, he said, he always meant to keep Venice in reserve for his old age when he should have retired from work and could dream away idle hours in an embalmed city. At last he acquiesced reluctantly with the air of a man who was spoiling a cherished project. As the train ran over the viaduct from Mestre across the lagoon, and the "back view" of Venice, with the iron chimneys and ugly modern buildings, came into sight, he exclaimed, "This can't be Venice; this is Chicago from the lake," a remark both humorous and apt. But a leisurely tour of the Grand Canal, a prolonged visit to St. Mark's, the Piazza, the Doge's Palace, the Frari and the return by moonlight to the railway station, left him dumb with amazement. The unexpected size of the place overwhelmed him as much as its beauty. He vowed that, after the war, he would live there for some months each year. Yet he had only seen Venice in her war dress, with every important monument encased in sandbags as a protection against air raids. On the other hand, he had seen Venice as few tourists ever see her, empty of strangers, uncannily silent and gracious with the grace of a fragile invalid. He never saw Venice again, but he was always grateful to me for having forced him to go there.

From Rome, where we had considerable talk with Sonnino — whom I found stubborn in defence of the Treaty of London and unwilling to discuss the larger aspects of the war — we turned northward to Switzerland. If Rome, with her brightly lighted streets, far removed from fear of air raids, had seemed strangely unwarlike, the atmosphere of neutral Switzerland was stifling. At Zurich, Northcliffe and I parted company for a day. He went to Berne and thence to Mürren where a large Red Cross camp had been organized for wounded British prisoners from Germany. To the Red Cross he was devoted heart and soul. He had opened in *The Times* a Red Cross Fund which ultimately produced £16,000,000, and he felt personally responsible for the proper expenditure of the money. I had business in another direction. An English Roman Catholic friend had urged me to see in Switzerland the General of the Jesuits, Father Ledochowski, whose headquarters were then in the summer residence of the Bishop of Chur, at Zizers, near the Austrian frontier. From the Swiss frontier I had telegraphed to ask whether Father Ledochowski could receive me next day; and at Zurich I found an affirmative reply. Having despatched Northcliffe to Berne at 7 A.M., I took a train eastward an hour later. It was a raw morning, cold and rainy. On one seat of the compartment into which I climbed lay a man at full length, with his back towards me and apparently asleep. By the cut of his clothes and the trim of his beard he was a Viennese of good standing. "An Austrian diplomatist," I thought, and felt sorely tempted to read the name on the label of his travelling bag. While I hesitated, the sleeper awoke, stretched himself, sat up, and ejaculated with an unmistakable Viennese accent:

"*Scheussliches Wetter!*" (Horrible weather).

I agreed with him, as nearly as possible in the same accent, and we began talking. Though I had spoken little German for three years, the sound of his voice and the feeling that an Austrian sat opposite to me transported me again to Vienna,

and I was conscious of speaking German, or rather Austrian German, as well as I had ever spoken it. As far as I was aware, I made no mistake of gender or syntax. When we had left the lake of Zurich behind and were running into eastern Switzerland, my companion said:

"I suppose you are from this part of the country?"

"No," I answered, "I am American."

"You speak uncommonly good German for an American."

"In the United States we talk a lot of German," I returned; "besides, I lived in Vienna for a time some years ago."

"That one can hear. What is your State?"

"Minnesota," I replied, without hesitation — my sudden adoption of that distinguished State being perhaps prompted by a recollection that it has a considerable Scandinavian and German population and by the idea that my companion might not know enough about it to ask awkward questions.

"Well," he said, "I am in charge of the American Department at the Ballplatz" (the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office). "What do people think of the war in America? Are they going to elect Woodrow Wilson again?"

"The Lord hath delivered thee into my hands," I thought; and, replying to his question, I predicted "the chances are that Wilson will get his second term by a small majority."

"Donnerwetter! that's bad," said the Austrian diplomatist. "There is no relying on the fellow. I suppose you know Penfield, your Ambassador, and Grant Smith, your Counsellor of Embassy in Vienna?"

"I don't know Penfield, but I know Grant Smith," I said quite truthfully. "They must have plenty to do."

"Yes," was the reply, "but they seem to know nothing about public opinion in the United States. What *do* people think over there?"

"They hardly know what to think," I answered. "They are bombarded daily by all sorts of propaganda. Those pig-dogs of British swamp us with their stuff; and, as they control the cables, we cannot expect to get the truth from them. But the Germans are just as bad, or worse. They flood us

with wireless, which we believe until something happens to prove it all wrong. The French, the Italians, all of them, in fact, do their best to bewilder us. It is not until we come to this side that we can really get definite impressions."

"What impression did you get?" he asked eagerly.

"Well," I said, "you know that the British compel us to land at Liverpool. They treat us abominably, as though we were all spies. They strip us and search us, keep us waiting hours for a train, and when they let us start for London we are held up every few miles. A journey that used to take less than five hours now takes ten."

"Is their railway service so disorganized?"

"No, it's not that. You see the whole country is alive with soldiers, creeping with them. The British are raising armies as though they mean the war to last twenty years. Troop trains, crammed to suffocation, have precedence over ordinary traffic. Then come the trains with artillery — big guns, field guns, machine guns, miles of them. Then, other trains full of shells. It's a tremendous spectacle. It fairly bowled me over. I thought the British were getting tired, but in England people seem to think that they are only just beginning."

My companion's face grew long and he looked worried.

"You don't mean to say that," he exclaimed. "That's awful. But London, what is London like?"

"London is a little quieter than it used to be, but things are going on in much the same way as before the war. The rations are strict but there is plenty of food. The submarines don't seem to bother the people, and they snap their fingers at air raids. When an air raid is announced, they all bolt into the Tubes, or go down into the cellars and come out smiling when the raid is over. They think they are bound to win in time and they don't seem to care how long it takes.

"But what one sees in England is nothing," I added cheerfully. "It is in France that one is really impressed. After hammering the Germans at Verdun, the French believe they can knock them into a cocked hat. There's a confidence about them that is perfectly amazing. If in England munitions are

rolling in like the waves of the sea, in France they are being turned out in cataracts. Before I came to this side, I thought the French were pretty well bled white. But now I have been in France I really think they are going to give the Germans the devil of a hiding. What do you think?"

By this time my companion's eyes had filled with tears. "What you say is terrible," he murmured. "We thought that the war would soon be over. Anyhow, the Italians are worth nothing. Have you been in Italy?"

"No," I said. "I may go there later. But a friend of mine who came from Italy the other day tells me that the Italian Army is now much better than it was at first and that it is becoming very efficient. This last offensive seems to have put new life into it. But you, as an Austrian, ought to know all about that."

"Have you been in Germany?" the Austrian asked anxiously. "I think you might get a good impression there. If you will come to Vienna I will arrange for you to see something of our army, and then you shall go to the German front."

"I should like that very much," I said, "but I have important business in Switzerland and must get out at Landquart, the next station."

My companion said he was sorry, and made me promise to come on to Vienna as soon as I could. Then, as I got out of the train at Landquart, he shook both my hands warmly and thanked me in a sad voice for the valuable information I had given him. As the train started, I retreated into the waiting room and laughed more heartily than I had laughed for many a day. I felt that the "citizen of Minnesota" had perhaps done a useful bit of Allied propaganda.

THE GENERAL OF THE JESUITS

At Zizers I was received by an elderly English Jesuit belonging to an old Lancashire Roman Catholic family. Rarely have I met a man gentler in manner or with a more spiritual face. He wished to know the precise object of my visit, and

explained that the General would receive me immediately after luncheon. To him I could only adumbrate my purpose, for I wished to see how the General himself would "react" to what I had to say. Beyond the fact that Father Ledochowski was a relative of my old friend and political mentor, Count Dzieduszycki, I knew little of him. Memories of the power wielded by the Jesuits at the Vatican in the days of Leo XIII, when Father Martin was General and Cardinals Mazzella and Steinhuber represented the Society of Jesus in the Sacred College, made me, however, look forward to intercourse with the man who was, presumably, more effectively influential than any member of the Roman Church. After luncheon he appeared, entering the room silently and suddenly. Instead of the impressive ecclesiastic, conscious of power, whom I had expected to see, I found a slight, almost boyish figure, which might have been that of any well-bred Seminarist. My heart sank, for I doubted instinctively whether he would understand the ideas I wished to lay before him.

"Father," I said, "when I have explained the purpose of my visit, you may find it extraordinary; but since you have had the kindness to receive me, I shall speak quite frankly without expecting assent or dissent from you. In any case I do not come as a journalist seeking an 'interview.' I come as an enquirer interested in religious matters and persuaded that the Roman Church, in which you hold so eminent a place, may be deeply, perhaps vitally affected by the outcome of the war. From the beginning, I have been persuaded that there can be only one outcome. The Allies will fight through to complete victory. Had I not known as much as I know of the Vatican, I should have been surprised by its attitude towards the war and, in particular, towards the violation of Belgian neutrality. Most Englishmen think that his Holiness the Pope has been studiously neutral between right and wrong; but I am aware that ordinary mundane conceptions of right and wrong have no currency in exalted circles at Rome, and that Vatican policy is guided solely by what are held to be the permanent interests of the Church. The view of the in-

terests of the Church which I wish to lay before you is an outsider's view. I am not a Roman Catholic nor am I aggressively Protestant; but it seems to me that the prediction once made to me by your relative, Count Dzieduszycki, may now be fulfilled if the Church is wise. He, who was a sincere Catholic, though of larger mind and wider culture than most Catholics, claimed that the Reformation damaged the Church less on account of the schism it provoked than by inducing the Church, as he put it, to sell her soul to temporal sovereigns, to make of the Altar a mere buttress of the Throne, to forgo her mission as protectress of the weak against the power of the strong. The counter-Reformation, in which your Order played so vigorous a part, deflected the Church from her true path and made of the extirpation of heresy a more urgent business than the teaching of the Gospel by word and example. Not until an opportunity should offer for the Church again to defend Christian peoples against political tyranny, to stand with them, if necessary, against potentates and dynasties, would she be able, Count Dzieduszycki believed, to return to the right path and to exercise her true mission.

"It seems to me that this opportunity has now arisen; and I have come to ask you — you whom men call the 'Black Pope' and whose influence is sometimes thought to be decisive over the mind of His Holiness the 'White Pope' — whether the Church sees this opportunity, whether she intends to support the dynasties merely because they represent the principle of authority, or whether she will strive to lead the peoples, in harmony with herself, towards a happier future?"

A look of blank surprise came over the General's face. He remarked that Dzieduszycki had been a very worthy and cultivated man but a little eccentric.

"Yes," I answered, "he had the eccentricity of the seer; but I think he saw truly. Let us take a case in point. The Hapsburg Dynasty, which is Catholic and has therefore some claim upon the Church — though it has kicked and cuffed the Church mercilessly whenever it thought fit — is doomed to disappear. It has challenged the conscience of the world

and has provoked a struggle from which there can be no issue save in its disappearance and in the liberation of its subject peoples. What I wish to know is whether the Roman Church is going to link her fortunes to those of an effete dynasty, to serve as its henchman, or whether she is going to lead the peoples? Does she intend to oppose the liberation of the Czechs and Slovaks, for instance, at the risk of seeing them return to the Hussite faith? Is she going to oppose Southern Slav unity at the risk of seeing Strossmayer's threat to Pius IX fulfilled — that the Croats would one day forsake Catholicism for Orthodoxy if Catholicism were to be an obstacle to their national redemption? In a word, does the Church intend to march with the times or to lag behind them and see her influence yet further curtailed?"

What the General said in reply I cannot repeat, for he made it a condition that it should be confidential. But it showed conclusively that, for all practical purposes, I might as well have talked Sanskrit to him. Presently he reverted to politics and told me eagerly that a revolution in Poland was certain and that there would soon be a revolution in Russia also. In saying this his tone and bearing were those of an ardent Polish patriot in whose eyes the cause of Poland was identical with that of Catholicism. His information was remarkably accurate in detail. He seemed, indeed, to be the head of a great Intelligence Bureau; and when I mentioned to him the name of one of his principal secret representatives in south-eastern Europe, of whose doings I had long known, he showed surprise and special interest. But I could get from him no hint of any care for the bigger issues which I had wished to discuss with him.

THE BITER BIT

Early next morning I went from Zurich to rejoin Northcliffe at Berne. As the train started, another passenger entered my compartment. He opened a conversation by asking me in German if I could give him a match. We talked a while in German — which he spoke badly — until he asked whether

I spoke French. In French, his Russian accent was so unmistakable that I said:

"You are a Russian."

"Yes and no," he answered. "I am from the south of Russia."

"That means you are a Little Russian," I said.

"Quite right," he replied; and began to expatiate upon the Little Russian, or Ukraine question, on which I expressed views based on my experience in Vienna and on talks with Mgr. Count Szeptycki, the Uniate Archbishop of Lemberg.

Suddenly my companion said, "You are Mr. Steed."

"How do you know?" I asked.

"You have just repeated textually what you wrote in your book 'The Hapsburg Monarchy' three years ago on the Ukraine question."

"Quite right," I answered, "and you are M. Stepankowski, the agent of Mgr. Count Szeptycki. You called upon me in Vienna towards the end of 1912 but then you wore a moustache whereas you are now clean shaven."

He admitted the impeachment and we looked at each other with the air of two masked men who had just detected each other's identity. Travelling in Switzerland in wartime, I thought, is full of pitfalls. Yesterday I caught an Austrian and now a Little Russian has caught me.

When I entered Northcliffe's room at Berne he said, "You had a bad day yesterday."

"What makes you think that?"

"You have disappointment written all over your body," he exclaimed — a typical instance of Northcliffe's faculty for reading the minds of others.

I confessed my disappointment. It was not that I had expected the General of the Jesuits to see things from my standpoint or even to look upon the war as a moral issue. But I had hoped that he would have shown himself akin in spirit, not indeed, to Cardinal Mercier, whom the sufferings of Belgium might be held to have biased, but to Catholics of the type of Dzieduszycki. A few months later, I met at Montpellier an eminent French Churchman and a Royalist to

boot, Cardinal de Cabrières, the senior member of the French ecclesiastical hierarchy. To him I mentioned my talk with Father Ledochowski and asked whether my suggestions had been wholly incompatible with the interests of the Church.

"They were suggestions," he answered, "which I or any other Churchman alive to the bearings of this struggle might have made; but had you consulted me beforehand I should have warned you not to make them to a Jesuit, least of all to a General of the Jesuits. You asked him in effect to disavow the whole work and purpose of his Order, to understand things which he has been trained to be incapable of understanding. One day — for we must not doubt Divine wisdom — there may arise in the Church men who will conceive her mission loftily and will lead her towards the fulfillment of it. But not yet, not yet."

SPAIN

From Berne Northcliffe and I went to Geneva and thence to Paris. Even in Geneva, ardently pro-Ally though the French-Swiss were, the atmosphere of neutrality was still oppressive and we both heaved a sigh of relief when, at the Franco-Swiss frontier station of Bellegarde, we saw the horizon-blue uniforms again. Thence we returned to Paris and started at once for San Sebastian. We had been invited to spend two days with Sir Douglas Haig at British Headquarters on September 9th; and, in the interval, Northcliffe was anxious to see something of German propaganda in Spain. From San Sebastian we went by car along the northern coast, striking southward from Santander to Oviedo, Leon, and Valladolid, and returning by way of Burgos, Logroño, and Pamplona. If the neutrality of Switzerland had been oppressive, the neutrality of Spain was that of a country completely detached from the struggle and practically outside Europe. Germans were there in thousands — residents, refugees, merchants, and propagandists — all working to subordinate Spain to German ends and to turn the Iberian peninsula into a western Turkey. The Spanish press was largely under German in-

fluence and the omnipresent clergy were pro-German to a man. Yet the people were not only not hostile but, in most instances, positively friendly. The general results of our observations Lord Northcliffe reprinted in his book "At the War" of which the proceeds were given to the Red Cross. One small incident, not without significance, inasmuch as it suggested some of the agencies through which German international propaganda was working, I may record. At a little town called Infiesta we halted for some hours while a local smith mended a spring of the car. Just before we started again I found Northcliffe surrounded by a group of gypsy women who were addressing him volubly in German. They had begun by seizing his hand and wishing to tell his fortune, but one of them quickly made some political remarks which indicated that she was connected in some way with the German organization.

"For goodness' sake save me from these harpies," Northcliffe cried as he saw me. "They seem to think I'm German."

I spoke sharply to the women, one of whom replied in a German accent which I had only heard in Hungary. So I said to her, in Magyar, "How did you get here from Hungary?"

"I don't know Hungarian," she answered in correct Magyar, so great was her surprise at being addressed in what was probably one of her native tongues. Then reverting to German, she assured me that they were "with us" and would be glad to be of service. We only shook them off when the car started.

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

From Spain we turned northwards again and reached Sir Douglas Haig's headquarters at Beauquesne on the morning of Saturday, September 9th. We knew that the second great offensive on the Somme would begin in a few days, and we were greeted by the news that, north of the Somme, the British had just captured Ginchy. It was my first experience of British Headquarters and of the British Commander-in-

Chief. There was a businesslike air about the place and a quiet determination in Sir Douglas Haig's manner that impressed all visitors, though I could not quite banish doubt whether all the members of his Headquarters staff were mentally as alert as I had found some of the principal French officers to be. This doubt grew as I listened to their conversation and learned that they held strongly to what was then known as the "killing Germans" theory. One distinguished officer explained to me the Clausewitz doctrine in all its purity. He insisted that, since the objective of an army in the field must be the strongest point of the enemy, and since the strongest point of the Germans was on the Western front opposite the British positions, the one thing that mattered was for the British to smash that strongest point. All other operations were "side shows" that involved dispersion and waste of military effort. Attempts to take British forces from the Western front in order to reinforce the position at Salonika or the Italian front were criminally heretical. When I asked what would happen should we fail to break through the German front in the West, and suggested that it might be important to turn the German front by smashing Austria militarily and politically, I was told that the Staff were confident of breaking through in the West, but that should this prove impossible, the war would of course end in a stalemate. In any case it would be fatal to mix up politics with strategy, and the idea of breaking up Austria was sheer politics.

I had not before heard this doctrine so uncompromisingly preached, though Colonel Repington had often sought to convert me to it in *The Times* office. I felt that it was pedantically wrong; and between my views and the views of the Staff officers who maintained it, there was really no common denominator. They spoke, as professionals, of a professional undertaking. I spoke of the whole war as one vast politico-military problem. To them it was a game to be won or lost according to the rules. To me it seemed a matter of life and death for free civilization, subject to one rule only — victory. Sir Douglas Haig took no part in the discussion, and Northcliffe sheltered himself behind a formula to which he was to

cling until the battle of Cambrai fourteen months later — "Trust the soldiers!"

The true answer to the Clausewitz pedants was given to me in November, 1917, by Mr. Lloyd George at the Hôtel Crillon in Paris. Whether he had thought of it himself or whether it had been suggested to him I do not know; but, in any case, he was shrewd enough to recognize its force. In October, 1917, an Austro-German offensive had broken through the Italian front at Caporetto and, despite opposition from General Sir William Robertson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Mr. Lloyd George had decided to send reinforcements to the Italian front. The main considerations were that the Italian front had been smashed and was in danger of collapsing entirely, and that, if it collapsed, a portion of the French Army would have to be detached from the Western front to hold the Southeastern frontier of France. The British Army had been engaged for months in an offensive towards Passchendaele in Flanders and had gained some ground at terrible cost. When I saw Mr. Lloyd George early in December, 1917, he said, "Sir Douglas Haig has just left me. He has declared that he cannot spare another division for the Italian front and has assured me that he will soon take Passchendaele. He has quoted Clausewitz to me and I have answered, 'You soldiers take a village in Flanders, and Serbia goes smash. You take another village in Flanders, and Rumania goes smash. Next week you may take Passchendaele, and Italy will go smash.' I know all about Clausewitz. What he says may be all right in a war of movement; but this war is a siege. Clausewitz has also a chapter upon sieges. In it he says that the thing to do in a siege is to strike at the weakest point of the enemy defences, not the strongest point, as in a war of movement. That is what we ought to do, even in the name of Clausewitz. And that is what we are going to do."

But, in September, 1916, this situation had not yet arisen. British artillery was preparing the ground for the great attack which was to come on the 15th. So continuous was the bombardment that, after a few hours, the noise of it seemed normal. When a heavy mist fell in the early morning of

September 10th and the bombardment suddenly ceased, I awoke with a start. Afterwards I found that the sudden silence had wakened others also. That afternoon and next day Northcliffe and I visited the front and saw our gunners at work putting a heavy barrage over Ginchy to prevent a German counter-attack. They had been at it without a break for ten hours, relieving, by turns, a few gunners who found recreation in kicking a football about amid the old shell holes. The desolation of war was even more marked here than on the portions of the French front which we had visited; but there was a spirit in the men that breathed complete confidence.

Though desperately busy, as a Commander-in-Chief must always be on the eve of a great offensive, Sir Douglas Haig was no less confident than his men. He worked steadily, without stress or hurry, and found time to attend Divine Service in a little corrugated iron church which had been put up near Headquarters. That service, within a few days of a big battle, was one of the most impressive I can remember; and its impressiveness was enhanced rather than diminished by what, in other surroundings, would have been an amusing incident. The officiating Padre had given out a hymn which nobody knew. The soldier at the harmonium did his best but the singing was not hearty. At the end of the first verse the Padre interrupted, saying, " We'll try another," and gave out " The Rock of Ages." That everybody knew, and it was sung with intense devotion. Two other incidents of that day and the next are graven in my memory. Out towards the front, our car halted while some companies of a famous regiment moved up to take over the positions allotted to them in the impending offensive. The sight of these strong, lean men with their heavy packs and helmets, marching grimly on what many of them doubtless knew would be their last march, was at once tragic and sublime. I think all of us who saw it felt ashamed that we were not also marching in that column. Later on, I read an account of a visit to the front by E. W. Hornung, in which he put his own feelings, on seeing a regi-

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ment go up to the front, into lines that expressed exactly what had then been in my mind —

> And I felt like a man in a prison van,
> While the rest of the world goes free.

It was, albeit more poignantly, the feeling of which Northcliffe and I had been conscious when we came out of neutral Switzerland into France. It had then prompted me to add the following conclusion to Northcliffe's despatch on Switzerland:

> The departure of our youth for camp and battlefield is part, a large part, of the price we are paying for our freedom; but it is a singular fact that, despite the presence of young men [in Switzerland] the atmosphere of neutrality is depressing. . . . In these great days the breath of war is the breath of life, and the spirit of sacrifice is the spirit of regeneration.

But not until I saw that British regiment go up towards the front had I really ached to be in the fighting line or felt the bitterness of not being there.

A HARD QUESTION

Next evening, after dinner at Headquarters, a Staff officer in charge of munitions put to me one of the hardest questions I have ever had to answer. In *The Times* of that morning, my colleague, the late Mr. J. E. Mackenzie, had reproduced in his column "Through German Eyes" a paragraph from a German newspaper which alluded to the deadly effect of the British curtain fire over Ginchy. "Can you get me any confirmation of that?" asked the officer with his finger on the paragraph. "If that is true I must order another 100,000 of those shells at once. They contain pretty powerful gas, and the filling of them may cost the lives, or at least the health, of a score or two of the women who fill them. Yet, if I were sure that the shells we have put over Ginchy did such execution, I would not hesitate."

I asked permission to use the Staff telephone to London and enquired of Mr. Mackenzie whether in the German papers received that day there were any confirmation of the para-

graph. He hunted diligently but could find none, for the German censorship had again become very severe. I told the Staff officer that the search had been fruitless, but added, "If I were you I should order those shells. If you could put it to the women, I believe they would rush to volunteer for the work of filling them, especially if they thought that by risking their own lives or health they could give the men at the front a better chance." The officer nodded. I think the order went that night.

Before leaving the front, Northcliffe and I went to see General Sir Julian Byng at Canadian Headquarters where we spent some stimulating hours; and ended by inspecting something called "tanks," which Sir Douglas Haig had strongly recommended us to see. He had given us no hint of what the tanks might be; and we imagined they were new receptacles for oil or water, or some special device for the supply of the army. Nor did Sir Julian Byng enlighten me. When I told him of our errand he merely smiled a weird smile and left us the full effect of the surprise. At the sight of the rumbling caterpillar leviathans detraining from special railway trucks on to rolling ground behind the front, our first impulse was to laugh immoderately. There were "male" tanks and "female" tanks, the former armed with four-pounder quick-firers and the latter with machine guns. Northcliffe tried to enter one of them by the manhole on the top; but as his girth was some inches larger than the hole, he stuck midway and had to be hauled down to the inside by the feet while I sat on his shoulders above. Getting him out again was an even harder matter, though presently he emerged minus some buttons. This was a "male" tank of which the officer in command was extremely proud. He spoke with scorn of a neighbouring "female" tank called "Crème de Menthe" and predicted that her puny machine guns would be no good. When, however, the results of the first day's offensive were announced on September 16th, it appeared that "Crème de Menthe" had helped to capture the village of Flers and had rounded up a goodly number of German prisoners. What befell her "male" companion we never knew.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DARKEST HOUR
1916–1917

THE period between October 1916 and the end of 1917 was the true testing time for the Allied peoples. Had their spirit not been higher than that of their governments, the war could never have been won. The outlook in the East was profoundly discouraging. Disaster which the Allied forces at Salonika were powerless to avert had followed the Rumanian espousal of the Allied cause. In Russia premonitory signs of revolution were apparent. In the West, despite the use of tanks, the second battle of the Somme proved indecisive. On the Italian front progress was slow. The German submarine campaign inflicted increasingly heavy losses upon British and Allied shipping, while German air raids upon England became more frequent and resolute. Equally determined and even more efficient was the enemy attack upon the "home front" in Allied countries where sedulous pro-German and pacifist propaganda made headway.

The winter of 1916–17 was verily a winter of discontent, bitterly cold and long and void of encouragement. Strange though it may now appear, the Russian revolution in March, 1917, was hailed as signifying a more vigorous prosecution of the war by Russia and the elimination of German influences from the councils of the Tsar. The infernal efficacy of the German plan to send Lenin back to Russia for the purpose of demoralizing the Revolution was not perceived. Greater cause for thankfulness lay in the American declaration of war in April, though doubt long persisted among the European Allies whether the United States would be able to give effective military help in time. As the year wore on, the French spring offensive was seen to have collapsed and the British

offensive in Flanders proved to be costly out of all proportion to its apparent success. Moreover, before Passchendaele, its objective, could be reached, the Italian front gave way at Caporetto. Upon this sombre outlook one ray of light was shed in November, 1917, by the battle of Cambrai in which massed tanks broke clean through the German lines. So great was relief in England at this success that the Government forgot the reserve which had been maintained throughout the war and caused bells to be rung in sign of rejoicing — but the ringing was promptly checked by a vigorous German counter-stroke. Thereafter the gloom grew gloomier still.

Yet those fifteen months served to winnow the chaff from the wheat, to separate the fearful from the stout-hearted. They showed that the ready-to-halt were a small minority, albeit a minority not without influence. To the military struggle a moral and political struggle was thus added; and it became obvious that the war would have to be won in the hearts and minds of the Allied peoples before it could be won on the battlefield.

"THE NEW EUROPE"

As early as October, 1916, some of my friends had realized the necessity of providing a medium for the education of public opinion more apt, better informed, and clearer of vision than the daily press. Therefore, after ineffectual attempts to persuade *The Times* to undertake the work, Professor Masaryk, Dr. Seton-Watson, the late Dr. Ronald Burrows (Principal of King's College), Mr. (now Sir) A. F. Whyte and I, decided to found a weekly journal called the *New Europe*. Masaryk and Seton-Watson were the prime movers in the scheme. Seton-Watson bore practically the whole cost and, until "mobilized," did most of the work. The first number, published on October 19, 1916, declared:

> Its foremost aim is to further and consolidate that Entente Cordiale of Allied publicists which must accompany the wider political entente if the Allies are to think and act in harmony, and to help towards the formation of a sane and well-informed body of

public opinion upon all subjects affecting the future of Europe. Its highest ambition will be to provide a rallying ground for all those who see in European reconstruction, on a basis of nationality, the rights of minorities and the hard facts of geography and economics, the sole guarantee against an early repetition of the horrors of the present war.

It will be our endeavour to unmask the great designs of German war policy, to provide the historical, racial, and strategic background of problems too long neglected in our comfortable island, and to emphasize the need for a carefully thought-out counter-plan, as an essential condition to Allied victory. After our armies have won the war, our statesmen will have to win the peace, and their task will, indeed, be difficult unless public opinion is alert, organized, and eager to support them in a clearly defined and enlightened policy.

To the first number of the *New Europe* Professor Masaryk contributed an article defining the objects of German war policy. He revealed the meaning of the attempt to organize "Central Europe" under German hegemony, by means of economic and political union between Germany and Austria-Hungary into which the Balkans and Turkey were to be drawn, while the Baltic provinces of Russia as well as Poland, Holland and Belgium, Switzerland and Scandinavia were presently to be associated with it. Germany's ultimate object was to become a great Asiatic power by solving the old Eastern Question in her own interest. Masaryk traced historically the development of pan-Germanism, showed that the maintenance of Austria-Hungary was essential to the German scheme and concluded that

the German plan, as expounded during the war, has steadily progressed in the direction indicated. The weakening of Russia and the Slavs must be the first step, but the final stage is to be the overthrow of Britain.

THE SERBIAN SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Since we were all convinced that the overthrow of Austria-Hungary and the liberation of the subject Hapsburg peoples were necessary to defeat the pan-German plan, we deter-

mined not to limit our work to written propaganda. Therefore, simultaneously with the founding of the *New Europe* we formed a society called "The Serbian Society of Great Britain" with the objects of promoting Southern Slav union and of preparing the way for an agreement between the Southern Slavs and Italy that might neutralize the evil effects of the Treaty of London. Membership of this society was restricted to British subjects. The late Lord Cromer accepted the Chairmanship; and a number of prominent public men, including Sir Edward Carson, the Ulster leader, Mr. Ronald McNeill, Lord Treowen and Mr. H. M. Hyndman, the veteran Marxian Socialist, joined it. Its inaugural meeting was convened at the Mansion House on October 24th by the Lord Mayor of London when Lord Cromer defined its aims with great cogency.

The Germans [he said] aim at nothing less than world dominion, and especially at establishing a huge Empire to reach from the Persian Gulf to the Baltic. We think it is in the interests of the whole of Europe to offer the strongest possible resistance to the execution of this monstrous project. . . . One of the best guarantees [against it] is to establish a solid block composed of people of non-Teutonic race, who will act as a formidable and insuperable barrier to Teutonic aggression in the future. The Southern Slavs are well adapted to form this barrier. The main object of the Serbian Society, then, is to encourage the creation of a Southern Slav State. . . . I want, on its behalf, to give a most positive and emphatic denial of the idea that we are animated in any degree by hostility towards Italy and the Italians. . . . We think that Italy has an interest in forming that great Southern Slav barrier, and that her interests and Slav interests are really identical. . . . We should welcome any occasion in which we might be of use in smoothing over difficulties and bringing our two friends, the Slavs and the Italians, together.

Speaking in support of Lord Cromer, I added:

A thorough solution of the Southern Slav question requires not only political union between Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, but their eventual fusion into one united people. It is not a question of allotting to Serbia provinces inhabited by other branches of her race and tongue, nor of handing over this district or that to her as

"compensation." Nothing can "compensate" heroism so magnificent and sufferings so terrible as those of Serbia save the unification of the Southern Slav race. It is a question of giving practical application, in favour of the Southern Slav race as a whole, to the principle of nationality and the principle of equality of political and religious rights, and of securing for Serbia that seaboard of which her enemies have hitherto deprived her. It is, further, a question — and a vital question — of conciliating imperative requirements of Italian national security with the requirements of Southern Slav unity. Speaking personally, I may say that I have long been profoundly convinced that, without Southern Slav unity, formed in agreement with, and with the help of Italy, Italian national security cannot be obtained; while, without comprehension on the part of Italy of her own interest in making sure that no important section of the Southern Slav race shall be left unredeemed, Southern Slav unity will be hard to attain.

Despite Lord Cromer's assurance, Sonnino, the Italian Foreign Minister, took serious alarm at the formation of the Serbian Society. The Italian Ambassador in London was instructed to ask Sir Edward Grey to persuade Lord Cromer to relinquish the chairmanship. Sir Edward Grey declined; but, on hearing of this manœuvre, Lord Cromer asked me to accompany him on a visit to the Italian Ambassador, the Marquis Imperiali. I have rarely been present at a more singular interview. When Lord Cromer repeated the assurances he had given at the Mansion House, the Ambassador, much flustered, said:

"My lips are sealed. I can say nothing. I can only suggest an hypothesis. Should there be — I do not say that there is, I am only discussing an hypothesis — an engagement, an undertaking or even a written document of which the tenor were incompatible with the realization of the aims of your Society, would it not be an unfriendly act on the part of your Lordship to undertake or countenance anything that might appear to be directed against the implications of such a document which, of course, may not exist, inasmuch as I am only mentioning it hypothetically, for I am a diplomatist and, as I have remarked, my lips are sealed.'

"You mean the Treaty of London," answered Lord Cromer. "We know all about that. It is a very deplorable document."

"I would beg your Excellency to observe," continued the Marquis Imperiali, "that I have not mentioned or admitted the existence of any Treaty. As I have remarked, my lips are sealed, for I am a diplomatist and am bound to be discreet. But, on the hypothesis that a treaty may exist, are not treaties sacred, and ought any one of your Lordship's high standing to give countenance to any suggestions that a treaty ought to be revised?"

"My dear Ambassador," broke in Lord Cromer, "I am an old diplomatist, much older than you, and I have seen so many governments put their names to so many foolish and damnable instruments that when I see a chance of persuading an Allied Government to correct a fatal mistake before it is too late, I think it is right to take that chance."

"I cannot listen, I cannot listen!" exclaimed the Ambassador excitedly; "but please observe that I have not admitted the existence of any treaty, for my lips are sealed. I have merely examined an hypothesis and ——"

"That is quite enough, my dear Ambassador," said Lord Cromer. "I came here to tell you that the work of the Serbian Society is not directed against Italy. I have told you. Good morning."

Lord Cromer's comments upon the Ambassador's behaviour as we left the Embassy were, and are, unfit for publication. The effect of the interview was to strengthen Lord Cromer's conviction that the Serbian Society was right; and he supported us vigorously to the day of his death.

A HORNETS' NEST

When we founded the *New Europe* and the Serbian Society, we hardly realized what a hornets' nest we were about to stir up or how viciously the hornets would buzz and sting throughout the remainder of the war and during the Peace Conference. We had touched pro-Germanism, active and latent, conscious and unconscious, at its most sensitive point; and we were few against many. Among the available civilians in England, Seton-Watson and I alone had enough first-hand knowledge

of the Hapsburg Monarchy effectively to explain the importance of the Austrian question. Others, like Sir Arthur Evans, Dr. Ronald Burrows, Mr. Hyndman, and Lord Treowen, shared our views as a result of their special experience or general knowledge; but Seton-Watson and I had been in the fray for more than ten years and we possessed the friendship and confidence of the principal leaders of the subject Hapsburg races. With Masaryk, who lived at Hampstead during 1916 and until the Russian revolution of March, 1917, we were in constant touch; and the secret information which he received from Austria through the Intelligence Service organized by Dr. Beneš (whose headquarters were in Paris) was always at our disposal. Supilo and the Southern Slav Committee which he and his fellow countrymen had formed with the support of the Southern Slavs in North and especially in South America, also coöperated with us actively. But neither the Czechoslovaks nor the Southern Slavs could seriously appeal to British public opinion. Their appeals were inevitably regarded as special pleading, whereas we could speak to our own people in the name of their own interests. Apart from Italian official hostility, we soon found that the forces opposed to us were mainly of three kinds:

(1) International finance which was interested in maintaining the German-Jewish financial system that formed the economic framework of pan-Germanism;

(2) Militant Roman Catholicism which was opposed to the destruction of the largest remaining Roman Catholic polity in Europe;

(3) The snobbishness of British "society" which looked upon "Austrians" as "nice people" because their country houses were well kept, their shooting was excellent, and their urbanity superior to that of the Germans.

In combination, these forces were potent. They worked chiefly through secret channels. A first hint of their power was given when Seton-Watson, who was unfit for military service, found himself suddenly mobilized as a private in the Royal Army Medical Corps and sent to do menial sanitary work in Lancashire. By this means it was apparently hoped

to gag one of the two men who knew most about an important enemy country. Naturally, the rest of us fought against so malicious a piece of stupidity and left no stone unturned to have Seton-Watson released; but it took two successive decisions of the War Cabinet to free him, the first decision being successfully evaded by War Office officials who were under pro-Austrian, or mistakenly pro-Italian, influences. Even after his release he was forbidden to write, and was seconded for political duty in a Department of Political Information organized by General Lord Gleichen. So strong were the pro-Austrian currents in England that even Sonnino, who visited London in July, 1917, became alarmed and asked me to explain their origin. He felt dimly that propaganda in England for the preservation of Austria might be as damaging to his cherished Treaty of London as our propaganda for the liberation of the subject Hapsburg peoples; for his conception of victory contemplated the maintenance only of an enfeebled Austria-Hungary at whose expense Italy should have obtained the territories which her military and naval staffs thought needful to her security.

One advantage our opponents could not take from us. Though we were few, we knew what we wanted, we had a definite programme for the reconstruction of Europe, we were well-informed and were ready to take risks. While the partisans of Austria — and, indirectly, of Germany — took refuge in negation and intrigue, we went ahead in the conviction that there could be no victory without so radical a transformation of Austria-Hungary as practically to make an end of the Hapsburg Monarchy, and that, in this transformation, the Czechoslovaks and the Yugoslavs must be the two chief factors. We recognized the substantial truth of Supilo's formula, " If our question goes well, all will go well; if it goes ill, all will go ill." We met every Saturday at my house, and elsewhere during the week. My room at *The Times* office became a point of pilgrimage for " alien friends " in London. On entering it my colleagues would sometimes look under the table to see if no " Czechoslavs " or " Yugoslovaks " were hidden there. I was supposed to have Czechoslovakia

and Yugoslavia on the brain. We also maintained close relations with friends in Paris and in Italy who were working for the same objects as ourselves; and we did our utmost, little by little, to educate unprejudiced public men and Foreign Office officials to a sense of the true meaning of the Austrian question.

THE LLOYD GEORGE CABINET

Meanwhile, the Asquith Coalition Cabinet had been overthrown in December, 1916, by the resignation of Mr. Lloyd George who, after organizing the Ministry of Munitions, had become Secretary of State for War. The point at issue between him and Mr. Asquith was the necessity of forming a small War Cabinet whose members would meet daily and devote themselves exclusively to the prosecution of the war, leaving the work of administration to be done by ministers outside the Cabinet. Mr. Lloyd George suggested at first that he should take charge of this War Cabinet under the Premiership of Mr. Asquith who unfortunately, though not unnaturally, refused. Again and again Lloyd George threatened to resign but always flinched at the last moment. In the words of one of his friends, "he galloped gallantly towards the fence but, on reaching it, drew rein and looked round for a gate." At last, Lord Northcliffe's personal influence with him and the prospect of support from the Northcliffe newspapers helped him to make up his mind. He resigned, and the whole Government fell. On Mr. Asquith's resignation the King sent for Mr. Bonar Law who declined to form a Government and recommended Lloyd George. Even then Mr. Asquith might have consented to serve in a new Government had not his friends, and particularly Mr. Reginald McKenna, dissuaded him. None of them believed the Lloyd George administration could last long. Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Curzon, Lord Milner, and Mr. Arthur Henderson of the Labour Party were the first members of the War Cabinet, Mr. Bonar Law becoming leader of the House of Commons, Lord Balfour, Foreign Secretary, Lord Derby, Secretary for War, and Sir Edward Carson, First Lord of the Admiralty.

In point of fact, the British Cabinet crisis was merely a part of a general crisis in Allied countries. The French press was insistently demanding drastic military changes; and the Chamber sat more and more frequently in secret session. In Russia an unprecedented scene occurred in the Duma when the Ministers of War and Marine ostentatiously shook hands with an Opposition leader who had violently criticized the Government, the Emperor, and especially the Empress. In Italy, alarm and dissatisfaction with the conduct of the war against Austria were being vigorously expressed. In these circumstances the advent of Mr. Lloyd George to power in England seemed to justify hope that in London, at least, the war would be more clearly conceived and more energetically prosecuted. In regard to him the *New Europe* wrote on December 18, 1916:

> We have longed for a man who should be utterly a Man of War, because war is unhappily now our supreme business — not necessarily a soldier, still less a politician, but a man whose mind should be entirely given to the work in hand, caring for nothing else, thinking of nothing else, and staking his whole being on the achievement of his task. Have we found such a man? We do not yet know. We only know that Mr. Lloyd George has made mistakes in the past, that he has not always spoken or acted wisely, that he has seemed at times to be demagogue rather than statesman, but that there has nevertheless been in him, throughout the phases of his career up to the beginning of the war, a certain sweep and range of vision, a squareness of mind, a power of rising to occasions, a readiness to face awkward facts, that distinguished him from and placed him *potentially* above his contemporaries. . . . Above all he has faith and fire. Faith goes to faith. The country has had from the outset greater faith in itself and in the Allied cause than many of its responsible leaders have shown; and it has certainly not had many opportunities of indulging its faith in leadership. It has responded to Mr. Lloyd George because, almost for the first time during the war, its ear was caught by an appeal corresponding to its own intensity of feeling.

Until a few weeks before the Armistice of November, 1918, Mr. Lloyd George justified the confidence placed in him. Even when his colleagues were losing heart and giving ear to counsels of despair, he remained hopeful and buoyant. If some of his

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political and diplomatic expedients were dubious, his main purpose was sound. After his overthrow in October, 1922, Mr. Bonar Law, who succeeded him as Prime Minister, told me that only once during the war had he seen Lloyd George discouraged. That was on the morning of March 21, 1918, when news came that the Germans had broken through the British line in France. But, even then, despondency was transient and by the afternoon his old determination had returned. Other prominent ministers, whose names were regarded by the public as synonyms of stern resolve, bent and broke inwardly under the strain. The outstanding merit of Mr. Lloyd George was his perception that, for him and for Great Britain, there could be no evasion of the issue, that there was no way out or round or under, but only a way through — to victory. Though this perception sometimes became obscured, it guided him in the main. His great demerit was that, when the war had been won, he allowed his old skill as a parliamentary tactician to get the better of his finer qualities, and to beguile him into treating the Allied and Associated governments like so many pieces in a game, to be played against each other and manœuvred in accordance with his own political or personal predilections. Lloyd George as a Man of War was, on the whole, singleminded and valiant. Lloyd George as a Man of Peace was neither.

CAILLAUX

In December, 1916, it was essential that a man with " drive," insight, and imagination should be placed in supreme charge of affairs. It is improbable that any other British Minister could have broken through the ring of subtle and clandestine influences that were working to preclude an Allied victory. In England those influences had not yet found a focus, as they found it in December, 1917, when Lord Lansdowne was persuaded to publish what was, in effect, a plea for an inconclusive peace; but in France they centred round the name and person of M. Caillaux. The publication in *The Times* of an account of M. Caillaux's doings in Italy exposed me to some curious

manifestations of hostility when, in January, 1917, I went once more to lecture in Paris, and at Marseilles and Montpellier, on the British war effort. In the latter two cities I was threatened with violence by M. Caillaux's partisans unless I would retract publicly the information which *The Times* had published. I did not retract and the threats proved vain. In Paris I was publicly denounced on January 26, 1917, by a news sheet issued under the control of one of M. Caillaux's partisans, the notorious " Almeyreda "-Vigo. The denunciation referred, in remarkable detail, to my work as correspondent of *The Times* in Vienna, animadverted upon my opposition to the policy of Count Aehrenthal, and ended with the following singular outburst:

> This war has hit everybody. One man alone comes out of it untouched and aggrandized. When the history of its origins, so fertile in underlying causes, comes to be written, the part really played by the publicist Steed will gain by being shown up.

In truth, I deserve *"ni cet excès d'honneur, ni cette indignité."* My only merit, or fault, was that in Austria I discerned the natures of the forces which were making for war, that I did my utmost to oppose them, and that, when war actually came, I strove to explain why it had come and how its authors could be defeated. In doing this I knew that I was incurring the hostility of international finance and of its clandestine associates. I knew also that part of the strength of the pan-German plot lay in the belief of Jewish financiers and industrialists that, when German rule should have been established from Hamburg to Baghdad, they would profit largely as its economic organizers and agents. But I had not expected to find so ingenuous an outburst of this hostility during the war in a Paris news sheet issued by " Almeyreda "-Vigo and Landau, two of M. Caillaux's Jewish partisans, in France. Yet a curious incident that had happened when I had gone to lecture at Lyons in March, 1916, might have warned me that my peccadillos were not forgotten. The editor of an important Lyons newspaper published an article upon my lecture, and was promptly called to account by the direc-

tors of a large Lyons Bank, who were interested in the newspaper, for having referred approvingly to "a man who had once thwarted a French loan." The editor was strictly warned never to publish my name again. The reference was of course to the loan of £40,000,000 which Aehrenthal had attempted to secure from France in 1911 on the pretext that it would enable him to detach Austria-Hungary from Germany!

PRO-GERMAN PROPAGANDA

Of my lecturing tour in January, 1917, I have vivid memories. Pacifist and pro-German propaganda had gained much ground in the south of France. It took the form of sneering references to England and of insinuations that, since England was determined to get the lion's share of the booty while France bore all the losses and did all the fighting, it would be far better for France to come to terms with Germany and Austria-Hungary, and to leave Germany to settle accounts with England. Advantageous peace terms, it was whispered, could be got at once. France would merely have to insist that all the German Colonies which England had seized should be returned to Germany.

French ignorance of the constitution of the British Empire rendered this kind of propaganda peculiarly dangerous. To French minds the word "Empire" connotes domination or, at least, control as effective as that which France exercises in Tunis, Morocco, or Indo-China. They could not see why England should not order the Dominions to do her bidding in regard to the German Colonies which the Dominions had conquered or were helping to conquer; and they were half inclined to think that reluctance on England's part would be evidence of her predatory designs.

The only means of countering this propaganda was to explain the nature of the British "Empire," to show that it is an association of free nations and to insist that the war contribution of each Dominion in men and in money had been as voluntary as that of Great Britain. This I did at Marseilles and Montpellier. After some account of the efforts success-

fully made to organize the British armies, to supply them adequately with guns and munitions, and to show that British losses in the field had not been greatly inferior, while British financial sacrifices had been equal to those of France, I sketched the main lines of a lasting peace and its bearing upon the British "Commonwealth," and concluded:

It is of the highest importance that you in France should understand the real nature of our so called "Imperial" problem. You may think that the internal organization of the British Commonwealth is no concern of yours. If so, you are wrong. You are aware of the subtle manoeuvres of Germany and of her agents in all countries to make us accept a German peace in one form or another. You know also of her efforts to separate the Allies and to sow reciprocal distrust among them. Let me tell you one of the most dangerous manoeuvres Germany could undertake. Suppose she should say to France "We have had enough of it, we cannot go on. You also have suffered. Let us make peace. We will satisfy all your reasonable claims in Europe, and you would only have to tell the British to give back the colonies they have taken from us, especially in German Southwest and German East Africa, New Guinea, Samoa, and the smaller Pacific islands. We only want this"? Do you see the trap? England could not, even if she would, give orders to the British Dominions. Why did the South Africans, including the Boers, drive the Germans from Southwest Africa? Because the Germans threatened their freedom and their security. Do you think that the South Africans are going to give up Southwest Africa? Certainly not; and even if we wished them to do so, which we do not, we could not oblige them to give it up. The same applies to New Guinea and to Samoa.

So new did this reasoning seem at Marseilles that I was asked to repeat it from the steps of the Prefecture to a large crowd; but the bitter cold made this impossible. At Montpellier, I had an amusing experience. A few minutes before the lecture, the Rector of the University, a prominent Protestant Freemason, warned me that half the audience would consist of Clerical Royalists and the other half of Protestant Freemasons. "Try to speak so as not to offend anybody," he added appealingly.

The only way not to offend anybody, in such circumstances, was to be so frank with everybody as to create, at least, an

equilibrium of discontent. By good fortune all seemed to be pleased. In the first row sat the veteran Senior of the French Roman Catholic hierarchy, Cardinal de Cabrières, an Orleanist Royalist, then in his eighty-fifth year. At the end of the lecture he rose and signed to the Rector of the University, who was in the chair, that he wished to speak. But the Rector, horrified at the idea that a Cardinal should speak at the University, turned a blind eye on him and brought the proceedings to an end. Not to be outdone, the Cardinal moved with stately step towards the door, paused, and sent back his secretary to invite the Rector and me to luncheon at the Archiepiscopal Palace next day. So courteous an invitation could not be refused. When we reached the Palace, we were shown into the great hall, where the Cardinal spoke thus:

"Yesterday I wished to say, Monsieur le Recteur, how entirely I agreed with the views of the lecturer, and to thank him publicly for having illumined our ignorance with so many enlightening truths; but since I had not the good fortune, as they say in English, 'to catch the Speaker's eye,' I wish now to make to you and to him the speech I should then have made" — and he proceeded to deliver a little allocution which, for elegance of phrase and elevation of feeling, was one of the most perfect utterances of the kind I have ever heard.

As a result of the fierce cold in the south of France, where I found even the salt marshes near Aigues Mortes frozen inches thick, I was laid up with bronchitis. The discomfort of travelling and lecturing in a fuelless country, where all arrangements are made for warmth and none for cold, has to be felt to be realized. Even in the Grand Hôtel at Avignon, branches had to be sawn off a plane tree in the courtyard before a modest fire could be made. In Paris, things were little better. No coal was to be had. People lunched and dined in thick wraps or fur coats. When I procured a little coke to warm my room in the hotel, the attraction of the warmth was so great that I had as many as a dozen visitors simultaneously. Of food, however, there was plenty. While, in England, rationing was strict and people suffered hunger, Paris always

seemed to have enough to eat. Since France is more nearly self-supporting than other European countries, her Government could allow inroads to be made into the national reserves of food without running the risks to which a similar policy would have exposed Great Britain. On the other hand, France suffered more acutely than England from lack of fuel.

THE AUSTRIAN MIRAGE

While in Paris I was asked to address confidentially the French National Committee for Social and Political Studies, the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, the Foreign Affairs Committee of Writers, the Senate Committee for Parliamentary Action, and a group of the leading French industrialists. In addition I had long conversations with M. Briand, the Prime Minister, M. Albert Thomas, Minister of Munitions, M. de Broqueville, the Belgian Prime Minister, and many other prominent politicians and diplomatists. The structure of the British Empire and the possibility of a separate peace with Austria were the chief topics of French interest. In all quarters I found apprehension lest the reorganization of the British Empire after the war should hamper French trade and impede the recovery of France from economic exhaustion. French and Belgian statesmen advocated a permanent political and economic alliance between France, Belgium, and Great Britain. M. Jules Cambon, the former French Ambassador to Berlin, who was then especially influential at the French Foreign Office, earnestly advocated this alliance to which, he was convinced, Italy and Spain would also adhere. In regard to Austria, M. Briand and the War Minister, General Lyautey, felt sure that "something might be done." They had heard of friction between the young Emperor Charles and the German Emperor after the death of the Emperor Francis Joseph, and they assured me that so violent a scene had occurred between the two Monarchs when the Emperor William went to Vienna to attend the funeral that he had left again before it took place. The Emperor Charles had demanded that the Austro-Hungarian armies should be

placed under his own direct control, and had met with a flat refusal from the German Emperor and from Marshal von Hindenburg. But neither M. Briand nor any other believer in the possibility of "detaching" Austria could explain how the thing was to be done, seeing that the Austro-Hungarian Army and the whole organization of the Hapsburg Monarchy were firmly held in the German grip. My contention was that, however plausible the talk of "federalizing" Austria-Hungary, as a means of withdrawing her from the control of Germany, might sound in theory, it would prove impossible in practice. Even though the Austrian Germans might assent to it, the Magyars would resist furiously any attempt to reduce them to equality with the other Hapsburg races. The alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, I urged, was between Berlin and Budapest even more than between Berlin and Vienna; and that, unless this alliance could be broken, Austrian overtures for a separate peace would be merely a trap for the Western Powers.

On returning to London I found the ostensibly pro-Austrian forces hard at work; and, as soon as my health allowed, I exposed in *The Times* the objects of their campaign. I pointed out that it had begun after a meeting between a number of French bankers, of the international persuasion, with Austrian bankers in Switzerland; that shortly afterwards two German-Jewish papers, the *Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Vossische Zeitung*, had proclaimed the "federalization of Austria" to be a German interest on the ground that a federalized Austria would remain a faithful ally of Germany and a German bridge between West and East; while, thus transformed, Austria could never again become the rival of Germany. In France, Italy, and Great Britain, the cry "no dismemberment of Austria" had at once been taken up by Pacifist and pro-German writers. It had also been adopted by the Bolshevist wing of the Russian Soviets. The chief interest of international finance, I insisted, was that the network of Austro-German financial institutions, of which Vienna was a main centre, should not be destroyed by an Allied victory. The British writers who were claiming that the federalization of Austria

by the Emperor Charles would be a long step towards a satisfactory peace, should answer the question how the young Emperor could escape from German military, financial and economic control, and how he could overthrow the Magyar oligarchy whose control of Hungary was a vital interest of Prussia — for, without the "federalization" of Hungary, how could the "federalization" of Austria be other than a sorry farce?

THE SINGLE FRONT

To these arguments there was and could be no reply, and for some months the pro-Austrian campaign died down. Meanwhile, another campaign, less public but equally intense, was being conducted in British official and military circles for and against the principle of a "single Allied front." The failure of the French spring offensive and the heavy British fighting in the battle of Arras convinced impartial observers that the "killing Germans" theory and the "war of attrition" waged by the Allies separately, or with insufficient co-ordination, could never yield decisive results. General Sir Douglas Haig, the British Commander-in-Chief, and General Sir William Robertson, the Chief of Imperial General Staff, were the strongest partisans of maintaining an independent British command, whereas Mr. Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, General Sir Henry Wilson, the former Chief of General Staff, and Field Marshal Lord French, the former Commander-in-Chief, strongly favoured the principle of a single front with a single supreme command. Partisans of each tendency sought to retain or to gain respectively the support of Lord Northcliffe who adhered to the motto "Trust the Soldiers" — meaning Haig and Robertson — which he had adopted before the second battle of the Somme in September, 1916. The details of this controversy are not known to me but I have a shrewd suspicion that one of the reasons which induced Mr. Lloyd George to ask Northcliffe to go to the United States as head of the British War Mission in June, 1917, was a wish to utilize his knowledge of America and the Americans while removing his influence from the military wrangle at home.

If so, Mr. Lloyd George was mistaken. Before Northcliffe started he left general instructions to the editors of his newspapers to "back the soldiers" and thus stereotyped their attitude. Had he remained in England, his own view might gradually have been modified under pressure of circumstances instead of changing so suddenly as it changed after his return in November, 1917, when the collapse of the Italian front at Caporetto and the heavy British losses in the fighting round Cambrai and at Bourlon Wood convinced him that there was something radically defective in the British military conception of the war.

NORTHCLIFFE'S WAR MISSION

Of Northcliffe's War Mission to the United States I know little at first hand. Though I have copies of all the circular letters which he sent to his friends, they were not addressed to me in particular and I am not entitled to draw upon them. But his personal letters to me give an idea of the task he undertook. He never really recovered from the strain to which it exposed him; and I have always attributed the final collapse of his health to the hard work he did in America. He found British organizations in a chaos out of which he evolved some kind of order; but what weighed chiefly upon his mind were the impossibility of getting prompt or adequate replies from London to his representations, and the immense risk to which the Allied cause was exposed by the shortage of oil supplies for the British fleet. In eliminating this risk he received ready and efficient help from Mr. A. C. Bedford, the President of the Standard Oil Company and from other American oil magnates. One letter to me, dated August 21, 1917, illustrates his state of mind. It runs:

> Because I do not write to you, please do not think that you are not in my mind. I do not write because I get no time to write to anybody.
>
> A stupendous task has been placed on my shoulders. I am a sort of buffer between the United States Government and our own. The entire ignorance at home of American personalities and American ways causes us here great anxiety. The person with whom we have

principally to deal is McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury and son-in-law of the President; he is an able, ambitious man, and is considered a presidential possibility. He will advance no money to us without the endorsement of some military authority in Europe. His enemies accuse him of squandering money among the Allies like a drunken sailor—a well-known American phrase. I have been cabling to England about this matter since the 15th July, and we have had long silences and perpetual misunderstandings.

Make no mistake about it, this country is beginning to make war on a gigantic scale. It is muddling a good deal, but men are being enrolled with great rapidity, and they are fine men too. The change since I arrived is immense.

I do my best behind the scenes—urging expedition. I hope I am not flattering myself too much when I say I know I have helped.

Lloyd George's optimistic speech about the submarines did infinite harm here and has paralyzed our efforts to hasten ship construction.

There is an uneasy suspicion in Government circles here that our Government is rather weak. The American Government is *not* weak.

This exile is a great sacrifice and the work is infinite, irksome, and anxious. It begins at half-past six in the morning and goes on until bed time. I have not read a book or visited a place of amusement since I arrived. My consolation is that I am doing my bit, and I assure you that some consolation is required during the heat wave.

One day, I trust, an adequate account of Northcliffe's work in the United States may be published. At no period of his life can he have worked harder or done better service to his country. The financial situation worried him constantly, and when, partly at his suggestion, the American Government asked that Lord Reading might be sent to deal specially with it, Northcliffe was greatly relieved. All kinds of malicious rumours were spread in London as to the reasons for Lord Reading's mission; and, in a letter to Northcliffe dated September 20, 1917, I wrote:

> Foolish people, who do not know that you asked that he might be sent out, have been spreading stupid rumours, but by this time they have been well scotched, if not killed, by those of us who know.

In this letter I also gave some information for which Lord Northcliffe had asked about Austrian brutalities, and added:

the truth is that the Austrians and the Magyars have behaved just as badly as the Germans though their misdeeds have been given less publicity in England. It is not generally appreciated, for instance, that they have hanged some twenty thousand Austrian and Hungarian subjects for suspected civil disaffection alone; and that they have deliberately starved many thousands of Rumanes, Serbs, and Czechs. I fancy that the various Hapsburg peoples who are represented in the United States know a good deal more about these things than the English-speaking American citizens.

In reply to my references to Lord Reading, I received, on October 12th, the following telegram from Northcliffe:

Reading came by special urgent and repeated request of American Government. He has no diplomatic ambitions and is anxious to return as quickly as possible. Has partly solved almost impossible Canadian financial situation and achieved considerable success in Washington already. American Government helpful on the whole, but appalled by magnitude of financial task. They are complete masters of the situation as regards ourselves, Canada, France, Italy, and Russia. Loan to us strongly opposed by powerful section of Congress. If loan stops, war stops. Reading handling this dangerous and delicate situation so far perfectly. Washington likes him and he makes special appeal because he is a Liberal. People at home never seem to appreciate that the majority of members of the American Government are Liberals of *Manchester Guardian* type. War spirit here growing and preparations are enormous.

By this time I had heard that there was a prospect of Northcliffe returning to England, at least temporarily, and wrote him on October 14th:

I am glad to hear that there is some chance of your coming back at least for a time, because I am sure your influence here is needed. There are questions of Man Power to be settled, and also the question of our casualties to be considered. On this latter point I am not sure that the Government are getting all the facts, and there seems to be a good deal of hide-and-seek going on between Sir William Robertson and Lloyd George. We seem to have sent over to France something like 720,000 fighting men since the end of April without increasing our effectives there. Indeed, accounts I have received from regimental officers seem to show that the Army is now weaker than it was last spring, while the Reserve at home has fallen from 1,680,000 men to 920,000 men. It follows—or seems

to follow—that wastage and casualties have eaten up more than 100,000 men a month during the last six months, though we are continually assured that our losses are "very light."

So critical was the military and "man power" question that, when Northcliffe reached London towards the middle of November, a determined attempt was made to "nobble" him by the partisans of "the soldiers," in order that he might be impressed by their view before hearing any other side. I thought, and had serious reason to think, that the narrow "military" view was wrong and that the partisans of the "single front" were right; but I felt that direct evidence alone would convince Northcliffe, and that those who sought to "nobble" him would be likely to catch a tartar as soon as he had looked into matters for himself. Therefore I kept away from him and merely wrote advising him to listen to nobody until he could find time to go thoroughly into things. The "nobblers" had some initial success; but when Northcliffe went to the front after the battle of Cambrai, in which his favourite nephew, Lord Rothermere's eldest son, had been mortally wounded, he was shocked by what he saw and heard. He told me afterwards that his nephew — who was the first wounded officer to die in Lady Northcliffe's hospital for officers — had said to him, "We don't mind being killed but we object to being butchered." To Northcliffe, the loss of Lord Rothermere's first and second sons in the war was a poignant grief. They were splendid boys who had more than "done their bit" in the trenches, and had refused Staff appointments on recovery from earlier wounds. How far the sense of personal loss contributed to change Northcliffe's view of the military situation I do not know, but it certainly rendered him accessible to other arguments than those of the narrow military school.

Though I had no access to official documents at this stage, I have a record of some of the considerations which were debated by prominent members of the Government in the presence of Sir Douglas Haig, Sir William Robertson, Field Marshal Lord French, and General Sir Henry Wilson. They were:

The principal argument against what may be called the General Staff standpoint is that the Germans spent half a million men in learning an unanswerable lesson at Verdun. Instead of profiting by that lesson, the Allies had spent more than a million men in imitating the German methods at Verdun. The original programme of the Passchendaele offensive, which began on July 31st, estimated that the point actually reached on November 15th would have been reached by the middle of August. The attacks of October 12th along the Passchendaele ridge and of November 10th northwest of Passchendaele ought never to have been delivered. Too much was being asked of the Army and its spirit was being broken. The belief of the Higher Command, that the war would be won if the enemy could be driven away from the Belgian coast, was fallacious. The attempt to stake the whole of our comparatively depleted resources upon this form of strategy was dangerous in the extreme. The obsession of the General Staff by the idea that nothing mattered except this small section of the Western front had been one of the causes of the Italian disaster at Caporetto. The truth was being hidden from the country although the army as a whole knew it. The methods of blind hammering at a strong defensive position must be abandoned and the whole strategical outlook must be examined afresh, especially in the light of Italy's position.

CAPORETTO

It was at this time an open secret that Mr. Lloyd George shared the views of General Sir Henry Wilson and of Lord French on these matters. In Paris, on November 12th, he had spoken publicly of the need for an Allied War Council, to the want of which he attributed the Serbian, Rumanian, and Italian disasters. It was soon after this that I had with him in Paris the conversation on the Clausewitz doctrine which I have recorded in the preceding chapter. He certainly possessed the synthetic imagination which so many British, and not a few Allied, generals lacked. Though I saw him rarely, I knew that his influence had been decisive in causing General Sir William Robertson to change his mind after the Caporetto disaster at the end of October, and in procuring the despatch of three British divisions to the Italian front. I shall not readily forget the anxiety of those days. The news that the Italian front had given way on Wednesday, October 24th, and that, during the subsequent retreat, the Austrians

and Germans had captured 100,000 prisoners and 700 guns, reached London by German wireless between October 25th and October 27th. The whole Allied position was evidently imperilled. The Italian Government fell; alarm, amounting almost to panic, prevailed at Milan, and the question arose whether the Italians would rally sufficiently to hold the line of the Piave. Yet the British General Staff was strongly averse from any reinforcement of the Italians, and on Saturday morning, October 27th, Colonel Fagalde, the French liaison officer at the War Office, was informed to this effect. But his message to General Foch crossed a message from General Foch telling Sir William Robertson that the French General Staff thought the Italian position extremely critical and that three French divisions would start for Italy that night. Sir William Robertson took this message at once to Downing Street where Mr. Lloyd George and the War Cabinet decided immediately that three British divisions should also start for Italy, and instructed Sir William Robertson to go with all speed to the Italian front in order to see things for himself.

Nevertheless, the British War Office remained obdurate. The newspapers of Sunday, October 28th, bore evident traces of anti-Italian inspiration. The Italian military attaché, General Mola, and some of my colleagues of the Italian press, told me of their fear lest British aloofness cause an irreparable panic in Italy. Before going to *The Times* office on the Sunday afternoon I called, therefore, upon Sir Edward Carson who was then the minister in charge of propaganda and of the censorship. He informed me confidentially of the British decision to send reinforcements. But, on reaching the office, I found that a circular from the War Office had been secretly addressed to the Press explaining that the Italian situation was by no means so critical as the Italians made out, that the number of German divisions reported to be operating against the Italians had been grossly exaggerated, that the Italians still possessed a considerable superiority in men and guns over the Austro-German forces and that, in short, there was nothing to be excited about. Simultaneously with this circular, came another circular, evidently issued with British military ap-

proval, from a Russan officer in London, General Dessino, who claimed that the Germans had not withdrawn from the Russian front anything like the number of divisions mentioned by the Italians, and suggested that Italian accounts of the disaster were grossly overdone.

Since the editor was absent from London, I felt bound to act promptly. Returning to Sir Edward Carson's house I informed him of these circulars and said that, unless they were withdrawn immediately and replaced by official instructions to the Press to avoid comment discouraging to Italy, the effect of the circulars would be to induce an anti-Italian tone in the whole British press on the Monday morning and possibly to create in Italy the very panic which it was in the interest of the Allies to avoid. I told him also that, in view of this danger, I should submit to the Press Bureau for censorship a paragraph stating that British reinforcements were already on the way to Italy and that the Italian Government knew it; and I asked him to authorize the Press Bureau to pass the paragraph for publication.

Sir Edward Carson took action at once. The War Office circulars were withdrawn and, within an hour, instructions encouraging to Italy were substituted for them. My paragraph was passed by the censorship. I informed my colleagues of the Italian press and, through them, the Italian military attaché who had already made representations at the War Office. While a leading article, encouraging to Italy, was being written, Colonel Repington, then military correspondent of *The Times*, telephoned to announce that, in his comment on the situation, he was going to " slate " the Italians. I advised him to do nothing of the kind and warned him that, if he did, his article might not be published. I told him of the two circulars issued by the War Office, said I thought them disgraceful at such a moment, and added that people who could blunder so egregiously were not fit for their jobs. He asked if I thought General Sir George Macdonogh, the Director of Military Intelligence, unfit for his job, since it was probably he who had issued the circulars.

"In that case," I answered, "he is certainly unfit for his job."

Thanks to Sir Edward Carson's promptness, the leading London newspapers wrote, on the morning of Monday, October 29th, in a tone of warm encouragement to Italy and maintained it throughout the week, with a reassuring effect upon Italian public opinion. The feeling that Allied support was coming steadied the "home front" in Italy, while the "war front" was being steadied by arrangements made at an emergency Allied Conference. Little by little, the Italians rallied and strengthened their position on the Piave line. For this rally they deserve the more credit since the British and French reinforcements did not actually go into the line until it could be seen whether the Italians had recovered enough *moral* to stand. This question whether the Allied reinforcements should be used at once or whether they should be held in reserve, was one of the most critical of the war. Had they been thrown in at once, as the Italian Command wished, and had the Italian troops then given way in other parts of the line, the British and French divisions would have been needlessly sacrificed or overwhelmed in the *débâcle*. But the very fact that the reinforcements were there, nerved the Italians to gallant efforts and made it also a point of national honour that they should stop the Austro-German offensive unaided.

"LOSING MY HEAD"

In Colonel Repington's published diary "The First World War," reference to my attitude during the Caporetto crisis is made in terms of which the foregoing account may afford some explanation. In several passages of his book he twits me with my military views, but in the entry dated Friday, November 2, 1917, he writes:

> Steed is furious with the War Office, and pours into me over the telephone a stream of vituperation, but I can't make out what he wants. The Italian affair, which began on October 23, has resulted in a great smash, and Cadorna is back behind the Tagliamento,

with a loss of 180,000 prisoners and 1,500 guns. We and the French are sending divisions, but the whole affair looks very bad. Cadorna assured us before the attack that he and his generals were confident of success. They had a superiority of 200,000 men, but the 2nd Italian Army allowed the Germans, six divisions, to run over them, and surrendered in a wholesale manner, defending themselves feebly. Robertson is in Italy. Most people seem to have lost their heads like Steed, and to be busy abusing everybody else.

Whether it was I who " lost my head " readers may judge; but there was a sequel to the " stream of vituperation " that Colonel Repington alleges I " poured into " him on the telephone; and, in justice to Sir George Macdonogh, it must be recorded. Towards the end of the first week in November, Sir George asked me to call upon him at the War Office where he remarked, after some preliminary conversation:

" I understand that you think I am unfit for my job."

" You have either been listening at the telephone or somebody has been listening for you," I answered. " It is true that when Repington told me that you were probably responsible for those War Office circulars I said that, in that case, you were not fit for your job; and, having said it in my haste, I now repeat it at my leisure."

" Well," he answered, " I only want to tell you that I had nothing whatever to do with those circulars."

" Therefore," I returned, " my remarks do not apply to you," and we parted on the best of terms.

One other entry in Colonel Repington's Diary also requires some comment. Under date of Saturday, January 6, 1917, he writes:

> The Dutch Minister came up to consult me about the personages to be asked to a dinner which he is giving to the officers of the Dutch Military Mission now in England. He showed me the list and suggested an alteration. He thinks peace may come, and says that he has found hardly any one except Steed to discard emphatically and *a priori* the idea of peace. A good mark to Steed.

The Dutch Minister in London, M. van Swinderen, an active, pertinacious and extremely witty diplomatist, was indefatigable throughout the war in attempting to promote an

inconclusive peace. As a personal friend of the former Counsellor of the German Embassy in London, Herr von Kühlmann, he disseminated among his diplomatic colleagues and British public men von Kühlmann's ideas — which may also have been his own — upon the reëstablishment of contact between England and Germany. M. van Swinderen visited me again and again at *The Times* office in order to impress these ideas upon me. On one occasion he said, "If only I could get some reasonable British statesmen to meet my friend, von Kühlmann, for a few hours, I am sure they would come to terms." My answer was so emphatically negative as to be scarcely courteous, but the Dutch Minister took no offence. He pegged away with rare persistence, and even when I made it clear that he was wasting my time, he was not discouraged. He returned one evening to complain of a leading article in which *The Times* had taxed the Dutch Government with pushing its diplomatic neutrality to the point of unfriendliness toward the Allies. Expatiating upon the difficulty of Holland's position, he said that were she to show preference for the Allies she would have to fear German reprisals and might even share the fate of Belgium. I answered that we did not complain of her political and diplomatic neutrality but we did complain of her spiritual neutrality between right and wrong. The Allies were defending the rights and the interests of small nations, including those of Holland, and were entitled to expect that the governments of those nations should not be at heart against them. Allowances could be made for submission to *force majeure*, but not for alacrity in subservience.

Van Swinderen thought I was unjust toward Holland. He even urged that Dutch friendship for Germany might be useful to the Allies as soon as they wished to make peace. I assured him that any British statesman who might wish to make peace through Holland, or his friend von Kühlmann, would most assuredly and most deservedly be hanged. Van Swinderen answered that nobody else in London talked as I was talking, and declared that peace negotiations would have to begin because the Allies would never beat the Germans. "What you say," I answered, "is rank blasphemy. If the Allies do not beat

the Germans, it will be all up with your country; but they will beat them, in spite of you and your spiritual neutrality."

A few days later I came across van Swinderen in a corridor at the Foreign Office, where he was talking to the Italian Ambassador, the Marquis Imperiali. When he spoke to me in English, I replied in German and asked, "How goes 'spiritual neutrality,' your Excellency?"

"What horrible language are you talking?" exclaimed van Swinderen, also in German.

"The future language of the Netherlands. Hats off to it!" I answered.

"That only shows what nonsense a clever man can talk when he speaks a foreign tongue," was van Swinderen's witty reply.

If the Dutch Minister was one of the most active advocates of a drawn war, he was certainly not alone in thinking that peace might be made by negotiation; and some inkling of his reports upon the views of sundry British politicians probably reached enemy governments through their Legations at the Hague. Indeed, during the spring, summer, and autumn of 1917, neutral diplomatists in London would have needed especial acumen to judge the position accurately. After the Russian revolution, an insidious attempt was made to undermine the *moral* of Allied peoples in the form of a proposal that a kind of preliminary peace conference should be held at Stockholm by representatives of Socialist and Labour parties from Allied and enemy countries. The veteran British Social Democrat, H. M. Hyndman, however, denounced the Stockholm conference as "a trap arranged and manipulated to secure a German peace." "Who called the Conference?" he asked. "A small Dutch section [of the Socialist International] chosen only to keep the formal business of the International Bureau going during the war! A single fact will show how completely this coterie is subject to German influence. Of the three Dutch members who sent the invitations, one, the deputy Troelstra, a man of ability and an excellent speaker, received, like the Leninists from Zurich, a safe conduct through Germany. But Troelstra went much further than they did.

He visited Berlin, and there had a long personal interview with the German Minister for Foreign Affairs, Herr Zimmermann. What for? To obtain instructions for the [Stockholm] Conference? Surely this alone ought to convince the world how little the conveners of the Conference are to be trusted."

Fortunately the majority of the French Socialist Party refused to be represented at the Stockholm Conference, and the French Government presently declined to issue passports to the extreme Socialists who wished to attend. Ultimately the scheme fell through. None the less, it had been shrewdly conceived. It was launched at a moment when disappointment was felt in Allied countries at the failure of the French spring offensive under the new Commander-in-Chief, General Nivelle. It coincided also with another Austrian attempt to stimulate the belief of Allied governments in the possibility of making a separate peace with the Hapsburg Monarchy. When the Austrian Reichsrath assembled on May 31st, for the first time since the outbreak of war, the young Emperor Charles promised to introduce constitutional reforms as soon as peace should be made. Colour had been given to his protestations of sincerity by the resignation on May 22nd, of the Hungarian Prime Minister, Count Tisza, who, next to the German Emperor, had been the outstanding political figure in enemy countries. Early in June, the Austrian Emperor's brother-in-law, Prince Sixtus of Parma, attempted to enlist the sympathies of the French Government on the side of Austria and had also caused feelers to be put out in London. Mr. Lloyd George was influenced by them to the extent of asking the French Ambassador, M. Cambon, to beg the French Foreign Minister not to reject Austro-Hungarian overtures offhand but to consider them very seriously. Coming as it did in the midst of the French political and military crisis caused by the substitution of General Pétain for General Nivelle as Commander-in-Chief, M. Cambon's telegram caused alarm in Paris. I heard of this telegram within a few days of its being sent, though I found, on enquiry, that nothing was known of it either at the British Foreign Office or in the Prime Minister's personal secretariate at Downing Street. It was one of the many important but secret

communications that passed between the Allied Governments at critical stages during the war.

THE MISSION OF GENERAL SMUTS

Though these pro-Austrian intrigues led to no immediate result, they continued through the summer and autumn of 1917 and, in November, culminated in the departure of General Smuts on a secret mission to Switzerland where he met and discussed with Count Albert Mensdorff, the former Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to London, the possibility of making peace with Austria. In view of the Italian disaster at Caporetto and of the critical position in Italy, this Smuts mission was one of the most singular steps secretly taken by British diplomacy at a juncture when the Allied armies were preparing to face another winter in the trenches and the Allied peoples were nerving themselves for what they hoped would be a final campaign in the spring of 1918. What justification there may have been for such a mission it is impossible now to determine. That it took place, and that General Smuts was accompanied by persons in the confidence of Mr. Lloyd George and of the War Cabinet, is indubitable. It is unlikely that the British General Staff guessed the real objective of the Austro-German offensive against Italy in October, 1917, for it was not until the winter of 1921–22 that some very prominent British soldiers learned of it. During the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armaments, the German Commander at Caporetto, General von Below, met at dinner in Washington some of the Allied Commanders against whom he had fought. Among them was General Lord Cavan, now Chief of the British Imperial General Staff, who, in the spring of 1918, commanded the British divisions in Italy. During dinner, General von Below asked whether the Allies had ever guessed the real Austro-German objective at Caporetto; and, on hearing their answers, he told them they were wrong and that the real objective had been the city of Lyons. The Germans and the Austrians had hoped, after breaking through the Italian front, to overrun the north of Italy, to turn the

French Alps, and to be within striking distance of Lyons by the time the great German spring offensive would have begun in the northwest. In any case, the French would have been obliged to detach large forces from the Western front in order to defend what would have become the Southern front. Had the British General Staff suspected the nature of the enemy plan when the Italian front collapsed at Caporetto, General Sir William Robertson and Sir Douglas Haig would hardly have resisted the despatch of British divisions to Italy, even had they thought the Austro-German plan chimerical. But, in November, 1917, when General Smuts met Count Albert Mensdorff in Switzerland, the plan was by no means chimerical. Moreover, the existence of such a plan explains why the Austrians — doubtless, with German acquiescence — should have intrigued insistently for a "separate peace" with the object of bringing confusion into Allied councils. It shows also how imprudent was the British Government in revealing its anxiety for peace to the extent of sending so well-known a figure as General Smuts to a country like Switzerland where the movements of every prominent individual were watched and reported upon by a host of spies.

On the morrow of General Smuts's return from Switzerland I heard, through a trustworthy channel, that he had been on a mission to meet Count Albert Mensdorff and that the mission had failed. Therefore I called on him at the Savoy Hotel in London and had with him the following conversation.

"Well, General," I said, "here you are back again."

"Yes," said Smuts, "I could not stand being cooped up in London any longer. I am used to a life in the open air. So I rushed off to Devonshire for a week and now feel a new man. Those Devonshire lanes are really wonderful."

"Devonshire," I exclaimed. "I thought you had been in Switzerland."

"Switzerland!" returned Smuts. "What put that idea into your head? I have never been near Switzerland."

"That is very strange," I answered. "I thought you had been to Switzerland to discuss with Albert Mensdorff the

possibilities of making peace with Austria, and that you had not quite found a basis."

"What cock-and-bull stories you journalists do get hold of!" returned the General. "It is really preposterous."

But the General's tone convinced me that he was merely fencing. Therefore I continued:

"If you have never been to Switzerland, I suppose you have never been to Austria. Would it not be a little imprudent for a man knowing nothing of Austria to discuss Austrian affairs with a born Austrian like Count Mensdorff? I used to know something about Austria; but if I had been asked to meet Count Albert Mensdorff I would not have gone."

"Why not?" asked Smuts keenly.

"Because I should not have felt competent to deal with him," I continued. "I know enough of Austria to be pretty certain that when an Austrian official means 'white' he never says 'white.' Still less does he say 'black' as a Prussian might do. He usually says some shade of grey; and, in order to know precisely what shade he means, one needs to be a born Austrian or to be very skilled in Austrian matters. When I left Austria, more than four years ago, I could probably have guessed. But since then, the bloom has worn off my instinct. Had I been commanded to meet Mensdorff I should have insisted on taking two born Austrians with me, Dr. Beneš and Dr. Trumbitch, for instance. I should have lodged them in another hotel and, when I had talked with Mensdorff, I should have gone to them and have said 'Mensdorff says so and so; I think he means something not quite the contrary. What is your feeling about it?' Then I might have got an approximate idea of what Mensdorff was driving at."

"That is very remarkable," said Smuts. "But then you are an expert on Austria. Now let us suppose that I have been to Switzerland and have discussed things with Mensdorff. What would you say to suggestions like this?"—and he proceeded to sketch several alternative schemes for the reorganization of Austria after the peace and the detachment of Austria from Germany.

"Do you imagine for a moment," I asked, "that the Ger-

mans did not know about Mensdorff's meeting with you? Is it conceivable that Austria could, if she would, escape from the German grip? Why, that would mean the collapse of the whole German position, for Austria is the key to it, and we shall never beat the Germans unless we smash Austria first. In some ways I am sorry for the Austrians, but it is their own fault. I warned them again and again between 1908 and 1913 where their policy would lead them to, and they would not listen. I told Mensdorff in July, 1914, that I would not help Austria to commit suicide. But now they have done it, and there is no way out for them unless the Allies are defeated or, what amounts to the same thing, unless an inconclusive peace is made; and there is no way out for the Allies unless Austria is smashed."

"I cannot say that I agree with you," said General Smuts. "I have been 'mugging up' Austria hard for six months, and I think I know something about it. Tell me, by the way, is Moravia in Hungary or in Austria?"

If he had asked me whether Northumberland is in England or in Scotland, I should have been less surprised. After telling him that Moravia was in Austria, I took my leave reflecting that, whether or not I repeated the conversation, General Smuts would always be entitled to say that he had emphatically denied having ever been to Switzerland; and that the danger of entrusting negotiations of that sort to a clever man unacquainted with the fundamental conditions of the Austrian problem were not small.

THE ADVENT OF CLEMENCEAU

Fortunately this danger, and, with it, the danger of an inconclusive peace, had, to some extent, been averted by the formation of a Clemenceau Cabinet in France. Early in November I had gone to Paris to give the inaugural lecture of a series upon "The Allied Democracies and the War," and had again found French opinion nervous and critical. The Painlevé Cabinet was without the authority to face the position and to prepare adequately against the big German offensive

which was to be expected in the spring. I sought to convince my audience, which was large, representative and very influential, that the British people were determined to win the war at all costs and, as a motto, I quoted a letter which a wounded French officer, whom the Germans had captured, had smuggled out of a German Reprisals Camp. It ran, "We are suffering horribly, but the brute is dying, dying slowly. Don't yield an inch!"

Shall we quail before the German offensive in Italy? [I asked in conclusion.] It is a peace offensive, an act of despair. Shall we admit our powerlessness to heal the sickness of the world? No, a thousand times, no! In our hearts we feel that our pains are the birth pangs of an era whose greatness will be in proportion to the faith and the courage we shall have shown. Let us not yield one inch.

There came in response so fervid an outburst of assent from the audience that I could no longer doubt French determination. I felt that M. Philippe Berthelot, the Director-General of the Foreign Office, who had assured me that France, as a whole, was sound, had judged his fellow countrymen rightly. He had also told me that, within ten days, Clemenceau would be Prime Minister and would liquidate the Caillaux affair — though Caillaux had long been M. Berthelot's personal friend — and that General Foch would lead the Allies to victory.

Armed with Berthelot's hint I called on M. Clemenceau, saying:

"Well, M. le Président, you are coming into power again."

"Yes. The country is calling for me. *C'est une force.*"

"What will you do?"

"I shall make war."

"What about Caillaux?"

"That is part of the war. I shall look after that."

"Whom will you have with you?"

"Pichon — he is a faithful dog — and one or two others."

"What about Albert Thomas?" (The former Socialist Minister of Munitions.)

"If he likes to come I will take him."

"And if not?"

"I shall pass him by."

"May I tell him that?"

"Certainly."

I asked about Albert Thomas because I had an appointment with him next day. His influence on Anglo-French relations had been valuable and his personal friendship with Mr. Lloyd George had enabled him to round off many a sharp corner. When I saw him I said:

"I hear that Clemenceau will soon be Prime Minister."

"You are quite wrong," he answered. "The [Socialist] Party would revolt against him and the Federation of Labour will not hear of him."

"Yet my information is very precise. I have even reason to think that when Clemenceau forms his Cabinet he will include you in it, if you are willing."

"I have to think of my Party."

"My dear Thomas, there are moments when a Party leader has to decide whether he will lead his followers or be led by them. This may be such a moment for you; and much, very much, is at stake."

"I fear the Party would not follow me. Besides, things are not going that way."

I heard afterwards that, on November 11th, Clemenceau himself went to Thomas and said:

"I am going to be Prime Minister. I am old, you are young. Lend me a hand and I will presently pass my hand to you"; but that, when Thomas mentioned his "Party," Clemenceau had answered roughly, "You are a rotter," and had turned on his heel.

On November 13th the Painlevé Cabinet fell. On the night of November 15th I was coming out of an Underground railway station in Paris into the darkness, when the light from below fell on the face of a bearded man who was descending the stairway.

"Thomas!" I exclaimed. He turned; and we went together into the street, where I asked him whether he had decided to join Clemenceau.

"No," he said. "Besides, Clemenceau is not going to form a Government. I have just come from the Presidency of the Republic and the crisis is going in quite another direction."

"Be careful, Thomas," I returned; "my information is that Clemenceau will form his Cabinet to-morrow."

"We shall see, we shall see," Thomas answered with a knowing smile. "Don't be too sure."

We did see. Next morning Clemenceau formed his Cabinet. Thomas was not in it — to the regret of all his friends; and Clemenceau trod his hard way alone, with some colleagues who were scarcely of the calibre for the big work in hand.

THE AMERICAN VANGUARD

Two other incidents of those days in France stand out in my mind. The first divisions of American regular troops were being trained for the front so that they might learn in advance the lessons of modern warfare which the French and British armies had learned at so heavy a cost. They had much to learn; but some of their French instructors complained that the American Regular officers were not ready pupils. "They think they know it all," said to me one French veteran, aged thirty. "Probably they will have to learn from the enemy (as we had to learn) that they have got to unlearn what they think they know before they can learn usefully. Your new British armies on the Somme were just the same in 1916, but they learned fast enough when fifty per cent. of their effectives were gone. Only, there may not now be much time for anybody to learn."

This situation, as well as the need of explaining to the American troops, officers and men alike, the origin and course of the war, was appreciated by the American Higher Command and by the American Y.M.C.A. headquarters in Paris, which did its utmost to promote intercourse and intercomprehension between the European Allies and the American Army. I was among the speakers invited to address gatherings of American officers and of men in Paris and elsewhere. My experience certainly did not bear out that of the French

instructor. I found everywhere the utmost eagerness to know and to understand. A first talk in Paris was printed verbatim in the Y.M.C.A. journal and circulated to all the American forces in France; and I was asked to repeat it, or something like it, to the officers and men in camp near Beauvais.

This was a strange adventure. We started one afternoon from Paris in an open 12-cylinder Packard car driven by a Hindu who knew a little French but had no idea of the country. The four American officers who accompanied me had a map, but spoke no French. Nevertheless, we managed to reach our destination, where I found myself confronting a large audience in a huge tent with double canvas sides and roof. A harder place to speak in I cannot imagine. The canvas seemed to absorb the voice before it could reach the front rank. In the smoky distance at the far end of the tent I saw a soldier leaning forward, obviously trying to hear. I felt that, if I could make that man hear, the others would hear also. For over an hour I kept his attention with a rapid sketch of European history since 1870, of the policy of Germany, of the struggles of the French Republic, of the reasons why England had come into the war and of what the British Empire had done, and ended with an outline of the kind of peace it was necessary to win. Then I urged upon all the need of going to school humbly and of profiting by the lessons which the Allied instructors could teach them.

It was my first experience of a large American meeting. Though I felt I was speaking quite well and that what I said would have roused any similar British or French gathering, the American soldiers remained stolid. There was little or no applause, and their faces were expressionless. At the end, the men clapped their hands — perfunctorily, as it seemed to me — for a few seconds, and I thought that my effort had failed lamentably. I was preparing to escape from the oppressive silence when a soldier in the middle of the tent stood up and, with a strong nasal drawl, said:

"Boys! I want every boy who feels like me, that he feels more than he can say, to get on to his feet."

Without a sound the whole company rose and stood silently

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to attention. Then one man came forward and shook my hand. During the next quarter of an hour my arm felt as though it were being torn off. At last one hulking fellow exclaimed:

"If what you said was true, and you said it as if it was true, what we were told before we sailed wasn't true."

"What were you told?" I asked.

"We were told that we were being sent over to Europe to fight England's battles because the British don't fight, if they can help it, but always get other darned fools to fight for them. Then, when the others are all killed, the Britishers grab the loot."

"Do you know what we in Europe have been told about America?" I replied. "We have been told that instead of coming into the war at first, or when the *Lusitania* was sunk, the Americans had just watched and waited till everybody in Europe should be down and out, so that America might chip in at the last moment and get all the glory with the least effort and at the least possible cost. You know how true that was."

"It's a damned lie," roared the men in chorus.

"Well," I answered, "by the truth of that, you may guess how much truth there was in what you were told. The only thing you and we have got to do is not to listen to tales about each other but to get on with the job, which is to wallop the enemy."

During the drive back to Paris — when we were lost for hours in a thick fog and our Hindu driver refused to go on — I had ample leisure to reflect on the miracle which had brought these men across 3,000 miles of ocean from a territory covering 3,000 more miles of land, to fight in what must have seemed to most of them an obscure quarrel among the funny little nations of Europe. Even now, few Europeans realize how extraordinary an event was the American intervention in the war. Many explanations of it have been offered, but I think the truest was given by the late Ambassador of the United States to London, Mr. George Harvey, though at the time it roused the wrath of his own people against him. He said, "We were afraid not to fight." From the Atlantic to the

Pacific Mr. Harvey was denounced for putting an unmerited slur upon his country. Even President Harding, with whom I discussed Mr. Harvey's speech at the White House in July, 1921, thought that his Ambassador had blundered badly. In the United States, nobody seems to have enquired why Mr. Harvey's definition was not misunderstood in England. The speech, which was addressed to an English, not to an American audience, meant, and was understood in England to mean, that the American people felt that if they did not fight, if they held aloof from the greatest struggle for political and individual liberty in the history of the world, they would disinherit themselves as co-heirs to free civilization, would be guilty of apostasy to their best traditions and highest ideals, and would irremediably lose caste among the democratic nations of the world. Thus they decided to fight for a cause which was ideally and morally their own, because they feared that, if they did not fight, the cause might be lost.

That was Mr. Harvey's meaning, as every Englishman knew; but Americans resent so fiercely any apparent slur upon the idealism which, when all is said and done, is their strongest national characteristic, that they hastened to place upon their Ambassador's subtle definition an interpretation which, in my view at least, it ought not to bear.

PROPAGANDA BY FEAR

In the other incident which impressed me during my November visit to France I was not directly involved. Nevertheless, it coloured my whole view of the immediate future. One of my French friends, who knew Germany thoroughly and who held an influential office under Clemenceau's Government, was visited secretly by a Swiss who had long been in close touch with influential German circles. He came ostensibly to warn my friend that, unless France made peace within the next two months, she would be utterly crushed in the early spring. I give the conversation as it was repeated to me at the time.

"You know how I love France," said the Swiss; "and I

have come to tell you that, if she wishes to escape complete overthrow she must treat for peace immediately. The Germans, as I have every reason to know, are preparing for the spring the most terrible offensive yet conceived. Russia is out of the war, Italy is holding on by the skin of her teeth, England has lost far more men than she can replace, the Americans are not ready, and France is bled white. Nothing can stop the Germans from taking Paris in March at latest, except a prompt peace for which Germany would not ask unreasonable terms."

"We are not afraid," answered my friend.

"You have the courage of ignorance," returned the Swiss. "You don't know what awaits you. There will be an attack in overwhelming strength at your weakest point, it will be supported by masses of tanks, an unprecedented concentration of artillery, tens of thousands of machine guns, gas of a kind you have never yet faced, clouds of aircraft, and a dozen new devices you do not even suspect. I beg of you to warn your Government that this is the eleventh hour."

"We are not afraid," my friend repeated.

"You are blind and mad," continued the Swiss. "I tell you, and I know, that the attack will be irresistible and that France will be crushed, perhaps obliterated. I adjure you to believe me."

"We are not afraid," was again the answer.

The Swiss changed countenance.

"If that is true," he said, "if you really have no fear, hold on. The Germans cannot stand another six months of it."

As I took train for London I thought again of the wounded French officer's letter from the German Reprisals Camp, "The brute is dying, slowly dying. Don't yield an inch."

CHAPTER XV

PROPAGANDA

1917-1918

BY the New Year, 1918, it was clear that the decisive hour was at hand. Secret information merely bore out the conclusions of common sense. However greatly the Germans might have been encouraged by the advent of the Bolshevists and strengthened by the collapse of Russia, they knew that the arrival of American troops in France must, in time, turn the scale in favour of the Allies. Thus Germany was bound to force an early decision. The position of the Allied Commanders was critical. They did not then expect that American reinforcements would, or could, reach Europe in the numbers or with the speed actually attained in the spring. Some of them thought, indeed, that the American arrivals would barely suffice to make good Allied losses in the fighting line. More than one Allied statesman lost heart. The Lansdowne letter, published in the *Daily Telegraph* on November 29, 1917, had not been an isolated phenomenon. Though the editor of *The Times* had rightly declined to publish it, the displeasure shown in unexpected quarters at his refusal and the warmth of the support given by pro-Germans and pacifists to Lord Lansdowne's plea for a negotiated peace, showed that it was a concerted move. To take, as Lord Lansdowne took, the assurances of enemy statesmen and the arguments of the Vatican at their face value; to argue that Allied ideas upon the future of Southeastern Europe needed revision at a moment when that region was entirely held by the enemy, Northwest Italy overrun, Russia in the grip of the Bolshevists, and the British line in France weaker than at any moment since the beginning of 1916, was tantamount to a confession that the Allies were well-nigh beaten and ready to sue for terms.

Even had it stood alone, the Lansdowne letter would have been one of the least praiseworthy performances of British public men during the war. But it formed part of active propaganda that was secretly going on in favour of an inconclusive peace. Among the memoranda confidentially circulated was one by a prominent officer wielding considerable political influence. When it was presently sent to me for opinion, I wrote upon it a docket that probably reposes to-day in the archives of a Department of State. Unluckily, I took no copy of the memorandum itself; but, if my recollections and those of others who read it are approximately accurate, it argued in favour of peace terms that would have given Germany a free hand in Russia and the East while leaving Austria-Hungary practically intact; and suggested that, though Belgian political independence must be restored, Belgium might be allowed to enter a German Customs Union.

My view of this memorandum was that, like the Lansdowne letter, it proposed in reality to leave Germany in a position to carry out the greater part, if not the whole, of the pan-German programme for the sake of which she had made the war. Of this programme the preservation of the Hapsburg Monarchy, under German control, was an essential feature; and, inasmuch as there could be no Allied victory without the liberation of the subject Hapsburg races, the existence and circulation of ideas like those put forward in the Lansdowne letter and in the officer's memorandum compelled men who believed in an integral Allied victory to be on their guard.

DECLARATION OF CORFU

They needed to be on their guard. Not only were the conscious and unconscious pro-Germans in Allied countries disseminating counsels of half-heartedness, but dissensions had arisen even in quarters to which an inconclusive peace would have meant total ruin. In the winter of 1916–17 there had been in the Southern Slav Committee serious bickerings which Seton-Watson and I had been instrumental in composing; and the Committee itself was far less efficient than the

Czechoslovak National Committee under Masaryk, Beneš and Štefanik. Supilo had left it, and Trumbitch, its President, had grown so disconsolate that, when I had seen him at Marseilles in January, 1917, he had talked of emigrating to South America and of earning his living as a taxicab driver in Buenos Aires. The Serbian Government, in exile at Corfu, and particularly the Prime Minister, Pashitch, were unwilling to accept the Southern Slav programme of national union on a federal basis with full political and civil equality for Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The Prince-Regent Alexander, with whom Seton-Watson and I had repeatedly discussed this question, was far keener of vision and broader of mind, but he was not a free agent, and Pashitch sought to circumscribe his action. In May, 1917, Pashitch, however, yielded so far to the pressure of circumstances as to invite Trumbitch to Corfu. On hearing of this invitation, Seton-Watson and I urged Trumbitch to come to London for consultation with us and Supilo. He came and agreed with us upon the main lines of any declaration of Yugoslav policy to which the Serbian Government might subscribe; and, after his departure, Supilo telegraphed an exhaustive statement of his own views to Pashitch in order to strengthen Trumbitch's position. The upshot was the famous "Declaration of Corfu" of July, 1917, in which Pashitch and Trumbitch, as "the authorized representatives of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes," recognized "the desire of our people" to constitute itself in an independent national State; adopted as its name "the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes"; provided for the unification of its flag and Crown but equally for the free use of special Serb, Croat, and Slovene flags and emblems; for the freedom of the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Mussulman creeds; declared that the Adriatic must be a "free and open sea," and that "the Kingdom will include all territory compactly inhabited by our people and cannot be mutilated without attaint to the vital interests of the community. Our nation demands nothing that belongs to others but only what is its own. It desires freedom and unity."

Three weeks later the Italian Foreign Minister, Sonnino,

and the Serbian Prime Minister, Pashitch, came to London and were present together on the platform when Mr. Lloyd George, at a public meeting, defined British war aims. Of the three statesmen Pashitch was not the least loudly acclaimed; and Sonnino, who made a non-political speech, received direct evidence of the strength of British popular support for the Yugoslav cause. Had the public then known the extent of the promises rashly made to Italy by Mr. Lloyd George at the Saint Jean de Maurienne Conference in the previous April, where the Treaty of London was confirmed and a sphere of influence was promised to Italy in Asia Minor, Sonnino might have been less warmly welcomed. In long conversations with him I explained once more the bearings of the Southern Slav question and argued that it would be to the interest of Italy to work for its complete solution on the basis of an Italo-Yugoslav agreement.

Sonnino, though alarmed at the progress of pro-Austrian tendencies in British official quarters, rejected my arguments and contended that he must, at all costs, hold on to his Treaty of London. He admitted, however, that Trieste would have to be a free port — for the singular and erroneous reason that "the whole current of Central European trade towards the South and East flowed through Trieste." When I controverted this argument, he confessed that his information was derived chiefly from Italianized Triestine Jews and that he had taken no account of the strategic intention in which the pan-German railway from Salzburg through the Tauern mountains to Trieste had been built. Indeed, I got the impression that his information was at once scanty and partial.

THE EFFECT OF CAPORETTO

In Italy the Declaration of Corfu had made a stir. It was interpreted — rightly — as an official enunciation of Southern Slav policy against the Treaty of London, but also, and wrongly, as a proof of Southern Slav hostility towards Italy. Its object was to create a definite charter of Southern Slav unity and to embody the aspirations of the Serbians of Serbia

and of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes of Austria-Hungary and Montenegro in one unitary pronouncement. The phrase that "the Kingdom will include all territory compactly inhabited by our people" was meant to leave open the door to negotiations and agreement with Italy in regard to the mixed territories around Trieste and in Istria which were inhabited by Slavs and Italians in various proportions. This intention was perceived by a number of liberal Italian writers who had come to understand how detrimental the Treaty of London had been and must be to the interests and to the security of Italy herself. Even before the Caporetto disaster a movement towards agreement with the Southern Slavs had sprung up among enlightened Italians and had made headway despite the fierce opposition of the Italian official and Nationalist press. But it was not until after Caporetto had opened the eyes of Southern Slavs and Italians alike to the intimate correlation of their political interests, that the movement became general. On the evening of Friday, October 26, 1917, when the first circumstantial accounts of the Caporetto disaster had reached London, Trumbitch came to see me in a state of consternation. "If Italy is smashed, we are smashed," he said and, literally with tears in his eyes, he deplored the Italian misfortune with the air of a man whose most cherished hopes had been shattered. Subsequently some members of the Southern Slav Committee in London and some Italians met by chance at my house and found in their common grief a bond of sympathy. From the contact thus established between reasonable Italians and Yugoslavs — Supilo, who would have mourned the Caporetto disaster as sincerely as Trumbitch, and would have worked with equal energy for an Italo-Yugoslav agreement, had unhappily died in the previous September — the idea arose that an attempt should be made to draft an informal Italo-Yugoslav agreement which might serve as a basis for future official negotiations. Consequently, some distinguished Italians and some representatives of the Yugoslav Committee met unofficially at my house on December 14 and 18, 1917, and, in two long debates, adumbrated the lines of a possible settlement.

As acting chairman of the Serbian Society of Great Britain after the death of Lord Cromer, I presided, and was supported on behalf of the Society by Sir Arthur Evans. Seton-Watson, who was still under military discipline, attended as " an expert." The Italians were General Mola, the Italian Military attaché in London, and his assistant, Captain Vicino Pallavicino; Major Filippo De Filippi, the head of the Italian propaganda Bureau in London; and Signor Guglielmo Emanuel, the London correspondent of the leading Italian newspaper, the *Corriere della Sera*, of Milan. The Southern Slavs were Trumbitch, in his private capacity as a Croat from Spalato in Dalmatia; Gazzari, a Croat from Sebenico in Dalmatia; Gregorin, a Slovene from Trieste and a former member of the local Diet; Meštrovitch, the great sculptor, a Dalmatian Croat; Trinaestitch, a Croat from Istria, and Banjanin, a Serb from Agram.

AN HISTORIC DEBATE

The intrinsic importance of this meeting and the misrepresentations to which it afterwards gave rise, necessitate some account of its proceedings. In opening it I said that the extremely critical position of the Allies made it a duty for everybody to help. It was not a moment to cultivate susceptibilities or to insist pedantically upon past engagements. If the Allies were defeated, all those engagements would go by the board. In that event, Italy could not hope even to realize her minimum national aspirations, nor could the Southern Slavs attain national unity except in the form of total servitude to Austria-Hungary and Germany. Between the official basis of Italian policy [the Treaty of London of April, 1915], and the official basis of Southern Slav policy, [the Declaration of Corfu] it should be possible to find a middle term. Italians should remember that the Treaty of London had already damaged them by making the war against Italy appear to the Southern Slavs of Austria-Hungary a war in defence of Slav territory, and that the Declaration of Corfu had operated in favour of Italy by stimulating a movement among the Southern Slav troops of Austria-Hungary in favour of unity

and, consequently, of defection from the Hapsburgs. This movement had, indeed, been one of the reasons which had induced Germany to take control of the Austro-Hungarian Army on the Italian front and to conduct the Caporetto offensive before the Austro-Hungarian Southern Slavs should become entirely unreliable; and now it might be turned definitely against Austria-Hungary and Germany if Italy, Serbia, and the Southern Slav Committee could agree upon a joint declaration of policy such as would reassure the Southern Slavs of Austria-Hungary in regard to the intentions of the Allies. By this means the Austro-Hungarian "home front" might be broken and the defeat of Germany hastened. Naturally, such a declaration could only be based upon the principles of nationality, and of security in the Adriatic for the chief Adriatic peoples. It was in the hope of finding a basis for some such declaration that I had asked Italians and Southern Slavs to confer together.

General Mola, the Italian military attaché, said that his presence must not be regarded as engaging in any way the Italian Embassy or the Italian Government. He had come solely in his private capacity as an Italian deeply interested in the problem of Adriatic security and in the establishment, by an Allied victory, of conditions for a lasting peace in Europe. He did not regard the Treaty of London as having been inspired by special hostility towards the Southern Slavs. The authors of the Treaty were dealing with a situation of fact, not seeking to upset a moral situation created by Southern Slav aspirations towards unity. In 1915, the possibility that Russia might secure control of the whole Slav world had to be taken into account in considering the defence of the Italian position in the Adriatic. But the course of events in Russia since the Revolution had eliminated the Russian factor. Italy might consequently be able to look at the Adriatic problem from a new standpoint. The entry of the United States into the war and President Wilson's proclamations of the principle of nationality and of the right of peoples to determine their own allegiance had also wrought a change. Patriotic Italians were therefore freer to look upon the

Adriatic question as a whole and to consider whether the material and moral interests of Italy could not be brought into harmony with the moral and material interests of Serbia and the Southern Slavs. But it was, in Mola's view, essential that Italy should not be the only Allied country to revise its war aims. There must be a general revision of Allied war aims, not merely a renunciation by one Ally alone.

Dr. Trumbitch also insisted that he and his friends were there in a private capacity, not as delegates of the Southern Slav Committee. He recognized the value of a friendly exchange of views and the establishment of personal relations with influential Italians. He admitted the force of General Mola's arguments that, in making the Treaty of London, Italy had not necessarily been animated by special hostility toward the Southern Slavs and that the possible ambitions of Russia had entered largely into Italian calculations. But the Treaty of London still existed. No agreement would be possible on the basis of it. The Declaration of Corfu, to which Serbia had given international value by communicating it to the Allied Powers as an official definition of Serbian war aims, represented the Southern Slav standpoint. Yet the Treaty of London was an international convention, whereas the Declaration of Corfu was, for the moment, a unilateral political act, of which the significance lay in the circumstance that it was the programme of the whole Southern Slav nation. Its fundamental idea was the union of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in one State on a basis of complete political and religious equality. In order to attain agreement with Italy on this basis it would be necessary to set aside the Treaty of London.

Sir Arthur Evans pointed out that the Treaty of London had been made in the supposition that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy would survive the war, whereas it was indispensable that Austria-Hungary should be broken up by the liberation of her subject peoples. Therefore the Treaty of London had lost its *raison d'être.*

General Mola pertinently argued that the other signatories of the Treaty of London had been as responsible as Italy for

its provisions. In order to prepare an Italo-Yugoslav agreement it would be desirable to start from general principles without entering too closely into territorial details at the outset. In the practical working out of any agreement it would be necessary to recognize the existence of what he would call "grey zones," between the distinctly Italian and the distinctly Southern Slav regions. The eventual delimitation of these zones would require much study and goodwill on both sides and, possibly, the good offices of a third party. Italy had no desire for conquest, but she could not leave her strategic security out of account. He must insist especially upon her strategic requirements. In attaining her own national unity, Italy had been obliged to proceed step by step and to make considerable sacrifices of territory. He begged the Southern Slavs not to be uncompromising from the start but to consider whether it would not be better to secure as much as might be practically possible now and to leave the rest to the future.

To these arguments I replied that the deep animosity which had arisen between Italy and France after the war of 1859 and the cession of Savoy and Nice to France, showed how dangerous the course recommended by General Mola might be. An agreement between Italy and the Southern Slavs would be worth little if it left burning questions open and allowed German influences, for instance, to play upon them. It was not merely a question of delimiting territory between Italy and the Slavs of the Adriatic but of laying the foundations for so close an economic, political, and even military alliance between them as would strengthen the influence of Italy and of her civilization on the eastern shore of the Adriatic and beyond. The Southern Slavs needed another "culture" besides their own. For them the choice lay practically between Italian and German "culture." It was to the interest of Italy that they should not choose the German, but that the knowledge of Italian which was widespread among the Slavs of Dalmatia should extend to the whole Yugoslav world.

Some doubt having been expressed whether aspirations

towards unity were general among the Austro-Hungarian Southern Slavs, all the associates of Trumbitch identified themselves with his statements, M. Gregorin in particular pointing out that the Slovenes could find only in union with the Serbs and Croats protection against the Germanizing pressure to which they had been exposed by Austria in order to prepare for German dominion over Trieste and the Adriatic. Trumbitch then controverted General Mola's suggestion that Yugoslav national unity might be achieved gradually. For the Yugoslavs it was a case of "now or never." If any considerable part of Southern Slav territory remained under Austria-Hungary, it would mean that the Hapsburg Monarchy would continue to exist and would be, under German control, a stronger agent than ever of Germanism. The recurrence of an upheaval like this war could not be foreseen and was assuredly not to be desired. The Southern Slavs must hold fast to their programme of complete national unity and of the liberation of the subject races of Austria-Hungary, the Czechs and the Slovaks, the Italians, the Rumanes, and the Poles, as well as the Southern Slavs. He believed this programme essential and in harmony with the true interests of Italy. He and his fellow Yugoslavs desired not merely an agreement but a relationship of close alliance and brotherhood with the Italians; but they could not purchase such an alliance by sacrificing regions whose inhabitants would speedily become centres of a Southern Slav irredentism that would prevent coöperation and cordiality.

A PASSAGE OF ARMS

On December 18th, when the debate was resumed, General Mola renewed his appeal to the Southern Slavs not to make "everything or nothing" their watchword. He thought that the application of the principle of nationality might well be made a joint war aim of Italy, Serbia, and the Southern Slavs; but at the same time he felt he must insist upon the importance of the "grey zones." The details of any settlement must be left to the Allied governments after victory and might depend upon the nature of the victory.

Trumbitch replied somewhat sharply that the situation as between the Southern Slavs and Italy was not a blank page but was covered by two conflicting, if not incompatible, agreements — the Treaty of London and the Declaration of Corfu. The former provided for the mutilation of Southern Slav territory; the latter for its integrity. It was necessary to know whether the Italian Government still pinned its faith to the Treaty of London. If so, the prospects of an Italo-Yugoslav understanding would be small. The Italian Government was no longer confronted merely by an unrecognized moral situation consisting of Southern Slav aspirations towards national unity. It was in the presence of a unitary policy solemnly accepted and declared by an Allied government, the Government of Serbia. Upon that policy the Southern Slavs took their stand, and they could not abandon it without betraying the peoples whom they represented.

Both the tone and the substance of Trumbitch's words made the position critical. Before any Italian could reply, I urged that the position was not, in reality, so crystallized as Trumbitch seemed to think. On the one hand, Baron Sonnino himself might have evolved somewhat during the war, and he might not always adhere unconditionally to the Treaty of London. British and French statesmen had, for their part, learned much; and the principles proclaimed by President Wilson had rendered the integral application of the Treaty extremely improbable. On the other hand, the position defined in the Corfu Declaration had not been reached in a day. Originally, Serbia had looked rather towards Macedonia than towards Croatia, Dalmatia, and Slovenia. When pressed by the Allies to make concessions in Macedonia so as to facilitate an arrangement between the Allies and Bulgaria, Serbia had spoken of "compensation" — meaning Bosnia-Herzegovina and an outlet to the Adriatic. Russia also had talked of "compensation," and, under the influence of the Holy Synod, had been averse from the principle of Southern Slav unity on a basis of equality, lest the purity of Serbian Orthodoxy be inquinated by Croat Catholicism. Serbian military circles had regarded the Southern Slav territories of Austria-Hungary as

a sort of Macedonia, to be annexed to Serbia and placed under a Serbifying military *régime*. Against this conception Supilo — and indeed, the Croats and Slovenes generally — had protested. They desired unification, not annexation. The true conception of Southern Slav unity, as set forth in the Declaration of Corfu, had only been adopted officially by the Serbian Government after the collapse of Russia, though it had long been held by enlightened Serbians and, in particular, by the Prince Regent, Alexander.

The Declaration of Corfu itself, with its proclamation of complete political and religious equality for Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and the provision that the new Kingdom would embrace all territory " inhabited compactly " by the Southern Slav peoples, left open the door to an agreement with Italy, inasmuch as the " grey zones," to which General Mola had alluded, were precisely the zones affected by the legitimate national aspirations of Italy. Once the principles of nationality, of Southern Slav unity, and of the security of the Adriatic were jointly recognized by Italy, Serbia, and the Southern Slavs, the basis for a lasting agreement would have been created.

In the light of his historical studies of the Eastern Adriatic region, Sir Arthur Evans observed that the possession of the eastern coast of the Adriatic had never afforded an adequate strategic guarantee to any Power. In the long run Dalmatia could never be held by a maritime Power against a State controlling the Hinterland. The Romans had occupied the coast but could do nothing with it until they secured also Pannonia and Illyria. The Venetians had held the coast but had never been safe against the peoples of the Hinterland. The Turkish conquest had come from the Hinterland, not from the sea. If the Adriatic was to be guarded against Germanic control it could only be guarded by Italy and by the Southern Slavs jointly. Singly, neither of them would be strong enough to guard it.

With these strategic arguments General Mola agreed in principle; but he urged again that there must be a general revision of Allied war aims, not a sacrifice to be made by Italy

alone. His personal military opinion was that it might be unwise for Italy to insist upon occupying parts of the Dalmatian coast from which she would be territorially separated. The time for holding colonies in Europe had gone by; and were Italy to possess a part of Dalmatia it could be merely a colony dependent on maritime connections. He thought there should be territorial continuity between the Italian mainland and Italian possessions on the eastern shore of the Adriatic

On the subject of Dalmatia, Trumbitch agreed with General Mola. The occupation of any part of Dalmatia by Italy would merely cut it off from the Hinterland and leave it to wither. Were a plebiscite to be taken in Dalmatia on the question "Italy or Yugoslavia?" many of the 18,000 Italian-speaking inhabitants of Dalmatia would join the 600,000 Dalmatian Slavs in voting for Yugoslavia, because Dalmatia could only exist and prosper by maintaining connection with her Hinterland. But the crux of the Italo-Yugoslav question was not in Dalmatia; it was in Istria and around Trieste. Save for the cities on the coast, Istria was preponderatingly Southern Slav; and the whole Hinterland of Trieste, as far north as the border of Carinthia, was also Southern Slav. No Southern Slavs could assent, even in principle, to the annexation of all these Hinterländer by Italy. For one thing, they would be disavowed by the populations themselves.

Before Trumbitch had finished, General Mola showed signs of impatience. Then he asked to be allowed to speak "with a certain vehemence." If the price of an agreement with the Southern Slavs was to be the abandonment of Italian national aspirations to Trieste, Pola, and Istria, in the name of which the Italian people had entered the war, such a price could not be paid. It was inconceivable that Italy should be asked to make such sacrifices. There must be give and take. In saying what he had said about Dalmatia, he had expressed his personal view and had, in particular, admitted the possibility of a sacrifice which would seem very heavy to a large number of Italians. But unless that sacrifice were to be recognized as such by the Southern Slavs, and unless they, in their turn,

were ready to make sacrifices, there could be no basis for agreement.

Thus we reached the climax of the debate. A tart reply from Trumbitch might have caused a breach. During the discussion I had gradually become aware of a difficulty I had not foreseen — the wide difference between the Italians and the Southern Slavs as to the meaning of terms which both were using. We were all speaking Italian, which Trumbitch spoke as fluently as Mola. But while Mola had an Italian conception of things, Trumbitch spoke unconsciously with an Austrian conception. In Austria, most political controversies turned upon points of historical "right" and of State or Constitutional jurisprudence. Each party to an Austrian political dispute was accustomed to begin by laying down as intangible, in theory, the maximum historico-juridical claims of its own side; and agreement, if reached, was only reached after long bargaining, on the strength of some new juridical formula. Trumbitch had in fact been using a juridical and political vocabulary which the Italians could not understand. Though I understood it by reason of my experience in Austria, just as I understood the Italian political vocabulary from having lived in Italy, I realized that an attempt to interpret the conceptions of the Austrian Southern Slavs to the Italians, or *vice versa*, would lead to so much disquisition and hair-splitting that it would probably be useless.

Therefore I suggested that Mola in his turn had not understood the real sense of Trumbitch's reservations, which had meant that the Southern Slavs would not, and could not, abandon in principle their maximum ethnographical claims unless they were quite sure that such abandonment would not place them in a false position. But, for the moment, it was necessary to be practical. English supporters of the Southern Slav cause and of an Italo-Yugoslav agreement were not concerned with the maximum demands of either side but with the possibility of finding a working basis for an agreement. They had never contested the right of Italy to Pola, to the Western coast of Istria, or to Trieste and the Triestine Littoral, nor did I believe that the Southern Slavs themselves seriously

contested it. The true question was, how great a part of Istria and how much of the Triestine Hinterland would be needed to give a fair political and geographical frontier to the new Italian possessions. This point could not be settled offhand; but, in our opinion, there ought to be no difficulty in providing for territorial continuity between an Italian Pola, an Italian Trieste and the pre-war territory of Italy. The idea that the Southern Slavs included Italian territory like Udine in their aspirations was absurd.

Yet, however the frontiers might ultimately be drawn, large numbers of Southern Slavs would inevitably remain on Italian territory just as a number of Italians would probably come under Southern Slav control in Dalmatia and Fiume. For these populations, special arrangements must be made; and detached racial minorities would have to be protected. But the whole question of Italo-Yugoslav agreement might be insoluble unless it were approached from the standpoint of the joint interest of both parties in defence of the Adriatic.

These views having been strongly supported by Seton-Watson, the debate proceeded amicably. Trumbitch explained that in speaking of Trieste and Pola he had only wished not to admit, even in a private conversation, the idea that, by means of a "grey zone," the whole of Istria and of the Hinterland of Trieste might be claimed by Italy. Neither he nor his friends could accept so heavy a responsibility. After I had urged that both Trieste and Fiume should be free ports so as to give an outlet to the sealess peoples of Central Europe; and after the positions of the Slovenes and of the Slavs of Istria had been defined by Gregorin and Trinaestitch respectively, General Mola summed up the debate as follows:

That in their joint struggle against Austria-Hungary, Italy and the Southern Slavs should take their stand upon the principle of nationality.

That, under an Italo-Yugoslav agreement, Italian claims to territorial possessions in Dalmatia might be modified, adequate provision being made for the protection of Italian minorities.

That, in the so-called "grey zones," important economic

and strategic factors must be taken into account besides the principle of nationality; and

That in any arrangement, race minorities must be respected by both parties.

Trumbitch added that the right of peoples to determine their own allegiance should not be lost sight of.

General Mola then stated that, in view of the measure of agreement reached, he would be prepared to abandon his private capacity and to report upon the debate to the Italian Ambassador. Trumbitch, for his part, agreed to report to the Yugoslav Committee and, when its assent had been secured, to draw up a memorandum for the British Foreign Office in conjunction with the Serbian Minister in London.

THE "WAR AIMS" CONTROVERSY

The beginning thus made was swiftly followed up. General Mola made his report, Trumbitch informed the Southern Slav Committee, Signor Emanuel acquainted the proprietor and editor-in-chief of the *Corriere della Sera,* Senator Albertini, with the substance of the debate and I communicated it both to the Foreign Office and the Serbian Society. The courage of General Mola in attending the meeting and in speaking as he spoke was of a high order, for it exposed him, as he knew it might expose him, to the rancour of the Italian Nationalists who thought no form of calumny too vile to use against him. I, too, presently came in for my share of abuse. I was secretly denounced by an Italian Nationalist for "holding festivals to celebrate the Italian defeat at Caporetto." Nevertheless, things went forward, thanks in part to propitious circumstances. The Germans and the Austrians had begun to negotiate for peace with the Russian Bolshevists at Brest-Litovsk; Mr. Lloyd George delivered, on January 5, 1918, a speech on British war aims after having informed Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey and the Labour Party of it; and President Wilson published, on January 8th, his famous "Fourteen Points" message to Congress. Early in February an influential committee, representing both Houses of the Italian

Parliament, was formed in Rome to promote agreement with the Yugoslavs; and it presently sent Dr. Andrea Torre, a distinguished member of Parliament, to negotiate with Trumbitch in London a definite formula of agreement.

In the meantime, Mr. Lloyd George's "War Aims" speech and President Wilson's message had raised a controversy with Count Hertling, the German Chancellor, and Count Czernin, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister. Under the influence of the pro-Austrian tendencies in England, Mr. Lloyd George had said, on January 5th, that "the breakup of Austria-Hungary is no part of our official war aims"; but he had also said "government with the consent of the governed must be the basis of any territorial settlement in this war." He had foreshadowed an independent Poland and the restoration of Belgium and Montenegro. As regards Italy he had recognized "the legitimate claims of the Italians for union with those of their own race and tongue"; and had promised justice to the aspirations of "men of Rumanian blood and speech."

An hour after making this speech, and before its text was available, Mr. Lloyd George sent for me.

"I have not been able to go as far as you would like about Austria," he said, "but you will find that my speech goes a good way; and, for tactical reasons, it is important that it should not be opposed in the Press. There is a good deal of tactics in it and a little Bolshevism, but, on the whole, I think you will find it sound and I hope *The Times* will support it."

I could not commit *The Times* in advance, and I made express reservations about the passages concerning Austria-Hungary. But I said that I thought *The Times* would not quarrel with the general character of the speech, though it might have to reserve judgment on any particulars with which it did not agree.

When I read the speech, parts of it seemed to be incomprehensible. To speak only of the right of the Italians to "union with those of their own race and tongue" was to deny, by implication, the validity of the Treaty of London which proposed to give to Italy large numbers of Southern Slavs

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who were certainly not of her race and tongue. At the same time, to state that the break-up of Austria-Hungary was no part of British official war aims, and that government with the consent of the governed must be the basis of any territorial settlement, was to talk self-contradictory nonsense. From internal evidence I concluded that the speech had been prompted by influences not unlike those which had sent General Smuts to meet Count Albert Mensdorff in Switzerland.

Three days later came President Wilson's "Fourteen Points," which, as regards Austria-Hungary and Italy, said:

IX. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.

It was not surprising that Mr. Lloyd George's and President Wilson's pronouncements should cause anxiety in Italy. When the new Italian Prime Minister, Signor Orlando, came to London towards the end of January, I found him perplexed as to their meaning. He had heard of the debate between Italians and Yugoslavs at my house in December and wished to discuss the position. Before discussing it, I asked for his promise that the action of General Mola should remain secret and that he should not be victimized for his courage by the Italian Nationalists. Signor Orlando gave the promise "on his word of honour as a Sicilian"; and we talked for two hours. As he pressed me for my "bottom thought," I said that Italy had now a chance of gaining an independence she had never enjoyed since she attained unity by the occupation of Rome in 1870. Until 1875 she had been under the direct menace of a French attempt to restore the Temporal Power of the Pope. From 1875 to 1882 she had wavered between France and Germany; and Bismarck had coerced her by encouraging the French to take Tunis and by threatening, in his turn, to espouse the cause of the Pope. Thus she had been brought into the Triple Alliance; but from 1882 until 1898 she had felt the drawbacks of French resentment. Despite her

efforts she had not escaped from German tutelage until she repudiated the Triple Alliance and entered the war in 1915. Even then she foolishly sought to safeguard her security by extorting from the Allies terms detrimental to herself. The only policy that could give her at once security and an honoured place in Europe would be openly to espouse the cause of the subject Hapsburg peoples, and to be their champion and advocate at the Peace Conference. Thus she might extend her moral and political influence across the whole Danubian region and secure the friendship of Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia, which would look upon her as their guide and protectress. Then she need fear the hostility of no Great Power. She would also have established a claim upon the gratitude of the Allied peoples for having been chiefly instrumental in the overthrow of Austria and, consequently, in the defeat of Germany. But the essential preliminary to such a policy must be sincere agreement and coöperation with the Southern Slavs and the Czechoslovaks.

As a step in this direction Signor Orlando agreed to receive Trumbitch, whom I introduced to him; and, at the request of both, I was present at their interview. Trumbitch stated his case ably and showed such comprehension of the Italian standpoint as to convince Orlando that, whatever other Southern Slavs might be, their leader was a reasonable statesman. At the end of their talk he invited Trumbitch to Rome. But, as he was apprehensive of Sonnino's opposition, he suggested that, as an old friend, I should write Sonnino a full account of what had taken place at my house and beg him not to oppose the new policy. This I did; and on January 29, 1918, my letter was sent in the Italian diplomatic bag to Sonnino who was then on his way to Paris. In order that it might be accessible also to others I wrote it in Italian, setting forth the reasons for an Italo-Yugoslav agreement, stating the results of the debate at my house, mentioning the Orlando-Trumbitch interview, and concluding:

The Austrophil tendencies of some official quarters here, the recent meeting between General Smuts and Austrian emissaries in Switzerland, and the slightness of President Wilson's knowledge of the

Austrian problem, convince me more than ever that it is expedient for Italy to follow a frank policy of liberation and of liberal encouragement and protection towards the Austro-Hungarian Czechs, Poles, Rumanes, and Yugoslavs. On the basis of the Treaty of London alone, Italy cannot maintain her position in the Alliance; whereas she can, by a broadly liberal policy, acquire a moral primacy among the Allies in Europe, facilitate an agreement with the Yugoslavs—without which the Adriatic will never be safe—and cut through at one stroke the whole network of shortsighted Austrophil intrigues in which too many Allied public men take delight.

THE "PACT OF ROME"

Sonnino let me know that he had received my letter; but, naturally, he did not answer it. Orlando, for his part, encouraged the Parliamentary Committee at Rome to push forward its work. Towards the end of February, it sent representatives to negotiate directly with the Yugoslav Committee in London and, in conjunction with a French Committee organized by M. M. Franklin-Bouillon and Fournol, to prepare for a Congress of all the subject Hapsburg peoples at Rome. Besides Dr. Andrea Torre, who came on behalf of the Rome Committee, the Italian Department of Propaganda sent Professor Borgese, a distinguished Italian writer, connected with the *Corriere della Sera*. Torre was an old friend, but Borgese I knew only by reputation. After some discussion with me and Seton-Watson, Borgese and Torre began negotiations with Trumbitch and his colleagues. Whenever there was a hitch or a deadlock, Seton-Watson and Sir Arthur Evans and I were called in to advise. Trumbitch could not move faster or further than the most recalcitrant members of the Yugoslav Committee, and was obliged to show an intractability which he was far from feeling. The patience of the Italian negotiators was admirable. Though they had never before come into contact with the exasperating qualities which Southern Slavs can display in negotiation, they kept their tempers and went to the extreme limits of concession. Yet, at midnight on March 6th, everything seemed to have broken down. The Italians had made their final offer which the Yugoslavs had finally rejected. During the early hours of March 7th, I and

other friends of the Yugoslavs did our utmost to bring them to reason. Some of us even pointed out that, should their recalcitrance prevent an agreement, they might as well leave London, since they would have shown themselves pro-Austrian in practice however anti-Austrian they might be in principle. But arguments and expostulations seemed unavailing; and Seton-Watson and I made a farewell appointment with Dr. Torre at midday on March 7th, when Trumbitch was to bring him the written decision of the Southern Slav Committee. Torre was so dejected that I promised to give him a letter for publication testifying to his patience and saying that, henceforth, I and my friends should withdraw our support from the Southern Slavs.

Shortly after midday Trumbitch appeared. Instead of a letter rejecting the Italian proposals, he brought five copies of those proposals which, with slight modifications, he declared himself authorized to sign. Much relieved, Trumbitch, Torre, Emanuel, Seton-Watson, and I therefore signed the five copies as originals in quintuplicate of an Italo-Yugoslav agreement, it being understood that its first three points were subject to ulterior approval by the representatives of other subject Hapsburg peoples, but that the last four points were binding upon the Yugoslav Committee and the Italian Parliamentary Committee alike. The text ran:

The representatives of the nationalities subject in whole or in part to the rule of Austria-Hungary agree in affirming the principles for their common action in the following manner—

(1) Each people that aspires to establish its own nationality as a State unity, or to complete it, has an imprescriptible right to full political and economic independence.

(2) Each of these peoples recognizes that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is the fundamental obstacle to the realization of its aspirations and of its rights.

(3) Therefore these peoples undertake to help each other reciprocally in the struggle against the common oppressor for their entire liberation so as to attain complete national unity in free and united States.

The representatives of the Italian and Yugoslav peoples agree in particular as follows—

(4) As regards the relations between the Italian nation and the

nation of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, also known by the joint name of the Yugoslav nation, the representatives of the two peoples recognize that the unity and independence of the Yugoslav nation is a vital interest of Italy just as the completion of Italian national unity is a vital interest of the Yugoslav nation. Therefore the representatives of the two peoples engage themselves to work wholeheartedly in order that, during the war and at the moment of peace, these objects may be entirely attained.

(5) They affirm that the liberation of the Adriatic sea and its defence against every present and future enemy is a vital interest of the two peoples.

(6) They engage themselves to settle amicably, in the interest of good and sincere relations in future between the two peoples, the various territorial controversies on the basis of the principle of nationality and of the right of peoples to determine their own destiny and in such manner as not to infringe vital interests of the two nations as they will be defined at the moment of peace.

(7) The right to respect of their language, their culture and their moral and economic interests will be recognized and guaranteed to the groups of each people that may be included within the frontiers of the other.

Every phrase, almost every word of this agreement — which became known as the "Pact of Rome" after it had been ratified by the Rome Congress of the subject Austro-Hungarian races in the following April — had been the subject of endless discussion. Though its terms were involved and general, they marked a turning point in the whole Allied situation and supplied a peg on which important policies could be hung. But before this stage could be reached, there were important developments in other directions.

ENEMY PROPAGANDA

Towards the middle of February, 1918, Northcliffe had asked me to see him at the "British War Mission," Crewe House, Curzon Street, which Lord Crewe had placed at the disposal of the Government. On returning to England from America, Northcliffe had set up in London a department to deal promptly with the recommendations of Lord Reading, who had succeeded him at Washington. At the suggestion of Sir William Tyrrell, the brilliant and resourceful official

of the Foreign Office, who had been for many years private secretary to Sir Edward Grey, Northcliffe was, however, asked by Mr. Lloyd George also to take charge of propaganda against the enemy. The name of "British War Mission" was to cover the "Enemy Propaganda Department" which was to work as a separate entity under the direct control of the Prime Minister, and be answerable only to Lord Beaverbrook's Ministry of Information in respect of finance. Northcliffe asked my advice and said, at the same time, that he had also been offered the Secretaryship of State for War. I warned him not to accept ministerial office of any kind. His health was not good and I was convinced that, should he attempt to work with permanent officials in a Department of State, he would soon be irritated into resignation. But I advised his acceptance of the Directorship of propaganda against the enemy on condition that he should have a free hand in framing and, subject to the approval of the Government, in executing the policies on which his propaganda would have to be based. When he enquired what connection there was between policy and propaganda, I answered:

"The same connection as between news and newspapers. The futility of British propaganda hitherto has been due to its divorce from policy. It is no good dumping down literature in various parts of the world explaining what noble people we are and how immense has been our contribution to the war. That does not interest people. You have got to make up your mind where and how you can hit the enemy hardest and then to get to work and do it without talking about it. For that, there must be a policy; and once it has been laid down and sanctioned it must be carried out by every available means."

"Where would you begin?"

"There is only one place where anything serious can be done at once. Germany is, or thinks she is, on the top of the wave. Russia has collapsed, the Italian front has been smashed in, the British Army has been seriously weakened by the Passchendaele offensive, and a big German push is being prepared against it. It is no good telling the Germans of the

evil fate in store for them when they have been beaten. They still think they can beat us. The moment to worry the Germans will come when they see that they cannot win. Bulgaria, and Turkey too, will be impervious to propaganda as long as they think Germany is winning. The only way to cure them and Germany of that idea is to smash Austria. That could be done in a very short time if the proper policy were adopted."

"Well, you wasted half your life there and you ought to know something about it. Will you make me a policy for Austria on a half sheet of notepaper?"

"I shall want two half sheets," I said.

"Take two half sheets but let me have it to-night," Northcliffe replied. "I have promised Balfour (then Foreign Secretary) to let him have my suggestions for the work of an Enemy Propaganda Department as soon as possible."

That evening I sent Northcliffe the following memorandum:

There are two conceivable policies for the Department of Propaganda in Enemy Countries. They are —

(a) To work for a separate peace with the [Austrian] Emperor, the Court, and the aristocracy, on the principle of not interfering with the domestic affairs of the Hapsburg Monarchy and of leaving its territory almost or quite intact; or

(b) To try to break the power of Austria-Hungary, as the weakest link in the chain of enemy States, by supporting and encouraging all anti-German and pro-Ally peoples and tendencies.

The (a) policy has been tried without success. The Hapsburgs are not free agents. They have not the power, even though they may wish, to break away from Germany because —

(1) They are controlled by the internal structure of their dominions (the Dual System) which gives Germany decisive leverage over them through the Germans of Austria and the Magyars of Hungary; and

(2) Because the Allies cannot offer them acceptable terms without breaking with Italy.

It remains to try the (b) policy.

This policy is not primarily, or even, in the last resort, necessarily anti-Hapsburgian; it is not opposed to the interests of the Roman Catholic religion; and it is in harmony with the declared aims of the Allies.

The Empire of Austria contains some 31,000,000 inhabitants. Of

these, less than one third, i.e., the 9,000,000 or 10,000,000 Germans of Austria, are pro-German. The other two thirds (including the Poles, Czechoslovaks, Rumanes, Italians, and Southern Slavs) are actively or passively anti-German.

The Kingdom of Hungary, including the "autonomous" Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, has a population of approximately 21,000,000 of which one half (Magyars, Jews, Saxons, and Swabians) may be considered pro-German and the rest (Slovaks, Rumanes, and Southern Slavs) actively or passively anti-German.

There are thus in Austria-Hungary as a whole some 31,000,000 anti-Germans and some 21,000,000 pro-Germans. The pro-German minority rules the anti-German majority. Apart from questions of democratic principle, the policy of the Allies should evidently be to help and encourage the anti-Germans.

Next day Northcliffe showed me the draft of a letter he had prepared for Mr. Balfour in which he had incorporated this memorandum, but he asked me to specify means by which the anti-German elements in the Hapsburg Monarchy could be helped and encouraged. Therefore I added the following suggestions:

(1) The Allied governments and the President of the United States should insist upon their determination to secure democratic freedom for the races of Austria-Hungary on the principle of "government by consent of the governed." Expressions such as "self-government," or "autonomous development" should be avoided, because they have a sinister meaning in Austria-Hungary and tend to discourage the friends of the Allies.

(2) For the same reasons, statements that the Allies do not wish to "dismember Austria" should be avoided. The war cannot be won without so radical a transformation of Austria-Hungary as to remove its peoples from German control. The Hapsburgs may be driven to help in this transformation if Allied encouragement of the anti-German Hapsburg peoples is effective. By themselves, the Hapsburgs cannot effect a transformation except in an increasingly pro-German sense.

(3) For propaganda among the anti-German peoples the agencies already existing should be utilized. These agencies are chiefly the Bohemian (Czechoslovak) National Alliance, the Southern Slav Committee, and various Polish organizations.

(4) The present tendency of the Italian Government to shelve the policy embodied in the London Treaty of the 26th April, 1915, and to adopt a policy of agreement with the anti-German races of Austria-Hungary should be encouraged and stimulated.

(5) The ultimate aim of Allied policy should be, not to form a number of small, disjointed States, but to create a non-German Confederation of Central European and Danubian States.

(6) The Germans of Austria should be free to join the Confederated States of Germany. They would, in any case, tend to secede from a transformed Austria, in which they would no longer be able to rule over non-German peoples.

The letter containing the memorandum and explanatory suggestions, together with some passages in which Northcliffe insisted upon the importance of making known to the enemy, through all available channels, accurate facts about the American preparations, was sent to Mr. Balfour on February 24th. On my advice, Northcliffe also included in it the condition that, before making any beginning in any direction, he "must be placed in possession of knowledge of the policy of the Allies as to the Dual Monarchy."

This condition, I felt, would bring matters to a head and make it clear whether anything serious could be done or not. On February 26th, Mr. Balfour replied:

Your very lucid memorandum raises in one shape or another the fundamental problem of the Hapsburg Empire. A final and authoritative answer to the question you put to me can only be given (if given at all) by the Cabinet, speaking in the name of the Government. But I offer the following observations on the subject in the hope that they may help you in the immediate task for which you have been made responsible.

If the two alternative policies of dealing with the Dual Monarchy set forth in your paper were mutually exclusive, and if they involved distinct and even opposite methods of propaganda, our position would be even more difficult than it is. For what we can do with the Austrian Empire does not wholly depend upon our wishes, but upon the success of our arms and the views of our Allies; and, as these elements in our calculations cannot be estimated with certainty, we should inevitably remain in doubt as to which of the two mutually exclusive methods of propaganda it would be judicious to adopt.

Fortunately, however, our position is not quite so embarrassing. As you point out with unanswerable force, everything which encourages the anti-German elements in the Hapsburg dominions really helps to compel the Emperor and the Court to a separate peace, and also diminishes the efficiency of Austria-Hungary as a member

of the Middle Europe combination. The Emperor, by these means, might be induced, or compelled, fundamentally to modify the Constitution of his own State. If he refused to lend himself to such a policy, the strengthening of the non-German elements might bring about the same end even more effectually than if he lent his assistance to the process. But, in either case, the earlier stages of that process are the same, and a propaganda which aids the struggle of the nationalities, now subject either to Austrian Germans or to Magyar Hungarians, towards freedom and self-determination must be right, whether the complete break-up of the Austrian Empire or its de-Germanization under Hapsburg rule be the final goal of our efforts.

Northcliffe handed me Mr. Balfour's letter on the 27th saying that I must answer it because he knew nothing about Austria-Hungary and must make me responsible for the whole business. I was ready to take responsibility, though I knew that failure would probably be disastrous to me in every way; and I could not help admiring Northcliffe's willingness to put himself and his reputation in my hands in regard to a matter of which he knew little or nothing. Therefore I drafted the following answer to Mr. Balfour which Northcliffe sent the same day:

Many thanks for your prompt reply to my letter.

Why I am anxious that we should move as rapidly as possible is that the Italians believe that a strong Austrian or Austro-German offensive against Italy will be launched within the next two months. If our propaganda in Austria is to help to weaken this offensive, or to turn it into a defeat, it ought, in my judgment, to begin at once, and all the agencies we can command ought to be hard at work within a fortnight.

The representative of the American Propaganda Department is in London. The Italian will be here next week, and we could no doubt have a French representative at the same time.

As to the memorandum, I am very pleased that you are in substantial agreement with the policy outlined. The two policies may not be mutually exclusive in the last resort, but it is very important that one or the other of them should be given absolute precedence. It would place me in an awkward predicament if, after basing vigorous propaganda on the (b) policy I were confronted with some manifestation of the (a) policy on the part of the British or other Allied Government. For this reason I hope that the War Cabinet will not delay its own decision, and that it will try to get a decision from France, Italy, and the United States as quickly as possible.

It goes without saying that public declarations on behalf of the British, French, and Italian governments, and, if possible, on the part of President Wilson in the sense of the (b) policy would, if promptly made, greatly facilitate my efforts.

To this rejoinder there was no written reply; but the whole matter was discussed by the War Cabinet and a verbal ruling was communicated to us that we might go ahead on the lines of the (b) policy, that is to say the encouragement of the anti-German elements in the Hapsburg Monarchy, on condition that we did not promise independence to any of the Hapsburg peoples. When I heard of this restriction I felt that the War Cabinet was still under pro-Austrian influences and that it was taking from us with one hand much of what it appeared to be giving us with the other. Nevertheless, I advised Northcliffe that we should accept this restriction for the time being, and do our utmost within the limits laid down.

TRUE PROPAGANDA

The essential thing was to act quickly. Northcliffe agreed at once to call a preliminary inter-Allied propaganda conference in London to consider ways and means. The French Government delegated M. Franklin-Bouillon, Italy sent Gallenga-Stuart, the head of her Propaganda Department, while the United States was represented by Mr. Robinette, an American delegate for propaganda in Northern Europe. But, as I was anxious that this first propaganda conference should be placed on a high level and that the members of the British Advisory Committee, which Lord Northcliffe proposed to form, should understand the nature of serious propaganda, I asked that M. Henri Moysset, chief private secretary to the French Minister of Marine, might also be sent. Moysset, whom I had known for some years, had written in 1911 the ablest book on Germany (" L'Esprit Public en Allemagne ") that I had read in any language. He spoke German well, was a profound student of German philosophy, and was personally acquainted with the leading German soldiers and public men from the Emperor downwards. Some objections were raised in

Paris to his coming; but he came. With him came also Lieutenant Tonnelat of the French Military propaganda section, a young French professor of German literature, whose achievements in technical propaganda had been remarkable.

Northcliffe, who was already suffering from an obstruction in the throat that was to necessitate a dangerous operation eighteen months later, opened the Conference but was unable to take part in its proceedings. He placed before it the correspondence with Mr. Balfour, and agreed to an Italian proposal that I should go on a special mission to Italy to coördinate propaganda against Austria. Apart from this decision the chief feature of the Conference was an improvised definition of " propaganda " by M. Henri Moysset. He insisted that the Allies must begin a war of ideas against Germany as a corollary of military resistance to her attack. Germany had made the idea of war acceptable to her own people by a generation of sedulous propaganda. Military defeat would not necessarily entail political defeat for Germany unless she were beaten also in the realm of ideas. He reminded those who thought this suggestion " unpractical " that German propaganda policy in Russia, of which the results had been so disastrous to the Allies since August, 1917, had been conceived and carried out by a metaphysician who had clearly foreseen the shattering effect of Bolshevist doctrine upon Russian minds. In view of the military position, Allied propaganda must aim, on the one hand, at quick results and, on the other, at the transformation of the state of mind prevailing in enemy countries. Therefore it should be directed in the first place against Austria-Hungary and be based upon the aspirations of the subject Hapsburg races without forgetting that even among the Magyars there were potentially anti-Hapsburg elements. Propaganda against Germany would then be possible, and its efficacy would be proportionate to the degree in which it were based upon the state of things created by the war and not upon pre-war ideas and conditions.

Hitherto, Moysset continued, the Allies had employed against Germany oratorical manœuvres, to which the German people was totally refractory. Speech-making diplomacy by

Allied statesmen ignorant of the German mentality was dangerous, not only because the enemy governments were able to place the declarations of Allied statesmen before enemy peoples in a garbled form, but because the enemy had at their disposal numbers of men sufficiently Westernized and Latinized to suit their counter-declarations to a Western public and to trouble the spirit of Western countries. The outcome of an oratorical duel upon a point of international law between Professor Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, and Professor Count Hertling, the German Imperial Chancellor, could not be predicted with complete certainty of victory for the Allied champion.

Allied propaganda should insist upon enemy responsibility for the war. After having kept this argument to the front for two years the Allies had allowed it to fall into the background. So frightened by it had the Germans been, that they had falsified documents and moved heaven and earth to weaken the Allied cause. So great was their anxiety that, when the idea of an International Socialist Conference at Stockholm had been launched, the German Majority Socialists made it an indispensable condition that the question of responsibility for the war should not be discussed; and when the Russian Revolution threw open the Russian archives, advantage was taken of every document that could be used to cast doubt on the purity of the Allies' motives. Herr von Kühlmann thought it a triumph of his psychological diplomacy that this fundamental issue should have been allowed by the Allies to fall into the background. It must now be revived and kept constantly to the fore, if only because the bulk of the German people were, in their heart of hearts, convinced that the guilt of the war lay upon Germany.

Similarly, Allied propaganda must insist that, after the war, Germans and Austro-Hungarians would have to face moral ostracism in the civilized world until atonement had been made. It must be shown that Prussianism constitutes a moral anachronism in the modern world. At the same time the Allies must confront the Germans with a positive formulation of public right and of the Law of Nations superior to the

German conception of "*Kultur*." It would not be enough merely to make fun of "*Kultur*," for it had a very real and positive meaning for the Germans and for the peoples with whom they are most immediately in contact, such as the Poles, the Czechs, and the Southern Slavs. These peoples, and the Germans themselves, must be convinced that the Allies have an equally positive but a more exalted conception of the political and social organization of Europe, fit to supersede the German conception.

For this purpose the Allies should take up the Principle of Nationality and the history of the Doctrine of Nationality as established by the English, American, and French revolutions, and by British Constitutional Law, and as worked out with great fullness by Italian jurisconsults between 1850 and 1870. During the last twenty years, writers on International Law had departed from this liberal doctrine and had embraced the Prussian conception to the extent of denying that the Principle of Nationality could justify any interference by one State in the affairs of another.

The attempt to define and clarify these ideas would compel the Allies to frame a positive conception of the future political and moral reconstruction of Europe, and to make up their minds as to the place of Germany in a reconstructed Europe. Thus they would have to put before neutrals and before the German people a forecast of the position which Germany would hold; and they would compel the German people to consider whether it would be worth while to continue the war, with all its perils, for the sake of a problematical mastery over Europe and the world.

The outcome of the war should be, in effect, a political verdict for or against one of two incompatible conceptions of the State and of society — the Prussian conception or the Western Democratic conception. Peoples, and the nationalities in process of formation in Central Europe and in Russia, which would eventually be called upon to choose between and to support the one conception or the other, should at least know clearly what alternatives there are.

This work of clarification and definition would be necessary

even in regard to the United States where the character of European problems is but dimly perceived. In one of President Wilson's own works all the references to European writers were to German authors. He was unaware of, or ignored, the large amount of valuable work done by French, British, and Italian writers on politics and State jurisprudence.

Many elements in Germany herself would be accessible to propaganda of this kind, that is to say those elements in Saxony, Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and the Rhenish provinces, which are not irremediably Prussianized or could be de-Prussianized were it clear that war for Prussian ends is not a remunerative enterprise. Among these elements the Jews should not be forgotten. They control the banks, the press, the theatres, and many forms of literature. They had been pro-Prussian because they believed in the profitable success of Prussian ideas and methods. Were they to doubt that success, their loyalty to Prussianism would tend to decrease.

Allied propaganda ought no longer to neglect the mass of material against Prussian militarism to be found in German speeches and writings from 1848 onward. In the past, German denunciations and definitions of Prussian militarism had been much more effective and pertinent than anything yet produced by Allied writers. They should be unearthed and utilized. An Allied committee for the provision of propaganda material in regard to the most important questions raised by the war ought therefore to be formed at once. It should be a kind of Thinking General Staff for the strategy of ideas and should not be concerned with the production of mere propaganda leaflets. It should arrange for a small series of powerful studies, scientifically conceived and going to the bottom of things, so as to appeal seriously to the intellectual classes in Germany. These should deal, for instance, with a new law of nations, with the economic organization of the world, with the working of a league of nations, and cognate subjects. They could be made known to the German public by means of the leading organs of the Swiss, Scandinavian, and Dutch press, some of which had already offered the Allies a free tribune for the discussion of constructive Allied ideas.

Hitherto the Germans alone had availed themselves of this free tribune. The Allies had done little or nothing, because they had no concerted policy and no positive and aggressive ideas to put forward. This inferiority must cease and, at the same time, the great organs of the Allied press should undertake a concerted offensive with the object of propagating the political and economic principles of which the rulers of Germany were most afraid.

Moysset made this remarkable statement with the help of a few notes hastily jotted down. I translated it paragraph by paragraph for the benefit of the Conference; and as no stenographer was present, I afterwards dictated it from memory in response to a general request, Moysset recognizing the accuracy of the reproduction. It was the first time that a serious definition of "propaganda" had been formulated in any Allied country. The Conference resolved that Moysset, Professor Borgese, and I should form the nucleus of a "Thinking General Staff" and that we should meet regularly in Paris to organize and coördinate Allied propaganda. Unfortunately, the jealousy of Moysset's intellectual preëminence that was shown in some French quarters prevented the full development of this work; and, in the meantime, the mission to Italy with which the Conference had entrusted me was an even more urgent task.

MY MISSION TO ITALY

I accepted the mission provisionally on two conditions. One was that the Italo-Yugoslav negotiations then in progress should lead to an agreement, and the other that I should be allowed to choose my associates. I suggested that Seton-Watson should accompany me, as an expert on Austria-Hungary, and that he should help to organize the Rome Congress of the subject Hapsburg Races — which would be our first great act of inter-Allied propaganda — while I was supervising the work on the Italian front. This was warmly agreed to by Gallenga-Stuart on behalf of the Italian Government. I chose also Signor Guglielmo Emanuel, the London corre-

spondent of the *Corriere della Sera*, as Italian secretary because he had been active in helping to promote an Italo-Yugoslav agreement. As military member of the mission I took (on the recommendation of General Sir George Macdonogh, the Director of British Military Intelligence) Lieutenant Colonel Granville Baker who, as a young officer, had held a temporary commission in a German Hussar regiment and had, in that capacity, studied the Austro-Hungarian Army from within. On the outbreak of the South African War he had rejoined the British Army and, between 1902 and 1914, he had been frequently employed on Intelligence service by the War Office. His war record was excellent and he had recently been given leave on account of wounds and trench fever.

When the Italo-Yugoslav agreement, or "Pact of Rome," had been signed on March 7th, I prepared to start, the actual date of departure being fixed for March 19th so as to allow me to make technical arrangements at the Italian front for the dissemination of the resolutions of the Rome Congress which was to meet on April 8th. We were given diplomatic passports and military "movement orders." Our baggage was deposited at Victoria Station on the afternoon of March 18th in readiness for the 7 A.M. military train on the morrow, when at 5 P.M. Northcliffe sent for me. I found him in a state of suppressed rage.

"We are in a nice mess!" he exclaimed. "Why did you choose Seton-Watson as a member of your mission? The Italian Government protests against his going."

"The Italian Government agreed very cordially to his going before he was appointed," I replied. "I chose him because, next to me, he has greater knowledge of Austria-Hungary than any living British subject"; and, in some ways, his knowledge is more detailed even than mine.

"Well, he can't go, that's all," said Northcliffe angrily. "You understand, he must not go."

"If he must not go, he won't go," I said. "Have his military superiors stopped him?"

"No. It's Balfour. He writes me that the Italian Ambassador, Imperiali, has protested formally against Seton-

Watson and has said that on account of his hostility to the Treaty of London his presence in Italy would be regarded as a provocation. So Balfour has asked me to stop him."

"Good," I said. "Hornet number one. You will be stung pretty often before this business is over."

"What do you mean?" Northcliffe asked.

"This," I answered. "Perhaps without knowing it, you have put your nose into one of the largest hornets' nests in the world. There are Jew hornets, Jesuit hornets, British snob hornets, pro-German hornets, and others besides. And they can all sting."

"Well, what are you going to do?"

"As this is probably an attempt to delay me, I am going to start at 7 A.M. to-morrow without Seton-Watson."

"It's a pretty kettle of fish," was Northcliffe's parting remark.

When I told Seton-Watson what had happened he was furious. He put it down to an Italian intrigue against him and was disgusted that Northcliffe should have submitted to Balfour's injunction. I thought there was more in it than we could guess, but I was determined not to let it delay the Mission. Before starting next morning I wrote, however, to Northcliffe warning him that the embargo on Seton-Watson was probably a blow struck by an unseen hand against his propaganda and that, if my surmise were correct, it would not be the last. I promised him to do my best, but said that it might be impossible to succeed unless I were supported from home.

We reached Paris on the morning of March 20th after an all-night journey from Boulogne in a cold railway compartment with broken windows. During the forenoon I called upon Franklin-Bouillon to hear what arrangements had been made for the Rome Congress on April 8th. Things seemed to be going smoothly; but he said:

"Haven't you got in your Mission an officer who was once in the German Army?"

"Certainly," I answered. "Colonel Granville Baker, who, as you know, was chosen during the Inter-Allied Propaganda

Conference in London on the recommendation of the British Director of Military Intelligence."

"Well," said Franklin-Bouillon, "I fancy he is suspect. If I were you, I should see Clemenceau about him."

"Why should I bother Clemenceau?" I asked. "The whole thing is clear. Granville Baker's papers have been issued by the War Office, and we are all travelling on a War Office movement order."

At midday, when Moysset and Tonnelat lunched with me, I mentioned Franklin-Bouillon's remarks. Both Moysset and Tonnelat ridiculed them. Tonnelat asked me to bring Granville Baker to the "Deuxième Bureau," the French Military Intelligence Department, that afternoon in order that he might be presented to his Chief, Colonel Gourguenne. Tonnelat said that the technical appliances I needed were practically ready and that a French engineer officer would be appointed to accompany my Mission to Italy.

At 5 P.M. I took Granville Baker to the "Deuxième Bureau," and asked for Tonnelat. Presently he appeared, with a long face.

"Franklin-Bouillon was right," he said. "Colonel Granville Baker has been denounced as suspect by telephone from London because he once served in the German Army. My Colonel [Gourguenne] refuses to see him. It is a very serious matter."

"Who denounced him?" I asked.

"That I do not know," said Tonnelat, "but you had better see the head of the British Military Mission in Paris, Brigadier-General Spears."

Fortunately, I knew General Spears, who was a friend of Northcliffe. Granville Baker and I drove at once to his office. When I told him our errand he seemed perturbed, though he did not admit previous knowledge of the affair. However, he knew Granville Baker. After a time he said:

"I think you had better see Clemenceau [who was Minister of War as well as Prime Minister]. Do you know him?"

"Yes, I know him well. But you must make the appointment."

General Spears hesitated.

"This is a very serious business, General," I continued. "I am here on an urgent offical mission and this officer has been given me by General Sir George Macdonogh, the Director of our Military Intelligence. Unless the matter is cleared up within twenty-four hours, I shall return to London, inform Northcliffe, and decline to proceed further. You know Northcliffe. There will be trouble. If the best thing is for me to see Clemenceau, will you kindly make the appointment?"

In five minutes the appointment was made by telephone for 10 A.M. next morning, March 21st. When I entered Clemenceau's room at the Ministry of War he rose and greeted me gravely. I did not then know that the great German offensive had begun at dawn or that the British lines had been forced back.

"What can I do for you?" Clemenceau asked.

"I am here on my way to Italy as the head of an official Mission sanctioned by the British Government," I said. "My object is to begin active propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian Army in Italy so as to forestall, if possible, an offensive. A member of my Mission, who has been allotted to me by the Director of British Military Intelligence, has now been denounced as suspect through some channel unknown to me——"

"Were you wise to take a fellow who was once in the German Army?" Clemenceau interrupted.

"Would you have had me take an ignoramus, M. le Président?" I returned. "That is the very reason why I took him, and also because he is one of the very few British officers who have studied the Austro-Hungarian Army from the inside."

"Do you go bail for him?"

"Since General Macdonogh went bail for him, I go bail for him."

"Then what do you want from me?"

"Three lines of *ukase* from you: 'Steed, whom I know, is on an important Mission. He and the members of his Mission are to receive all help from the French Military authorities.

Any officers and appliances they need are to be given to them.'"

Clemenceau rang for his secretary, who wrote the *ukase*. Clemenceau signed it and told the secretary to take me to the head of his Military Cabinet, General Mordacq, with orders to pass me on to the proper military quarters. But before I could leave the room a door opened behind Clemenceau's chair and General Foch, the Chief of General Staff, appeared with a map in his hands. He spread it out before Clemenceau, placing his finger on certain points.

"Your people have given ground," exclaimed Clemenceau, looking almost angrily towards me.

"They will retake it," I retorted.

Clemenceau rose from his chair, shook my hand warmly and said:

"Get off as fast as you can. You have not an hour to lose. An Austrian offensive in Italy is due to begin on April 10th. If you are going to do anything, you must be quick."

From General Mordacq I learned something of the big battle that was raging and of the overwhelming strength of the German offensive. The strain which it put upon the French General Staff prevented me from making my arrangements as quickly as I had hoped, and I found it would be impossible to leave Paris before the evening of Saturday, March 23rd. I took advantage of the interval to confer with the Italian representative on the Inter-Allied Military Council at Versailles, to see Dr. Beneš and also M. Dinowski, the head of the Polish National Committee, and to attend a special meeting of the Polish, Yugoslav, Czechoslovak, and Rumane representatives at which a propaganda manifesto to the Austro-Hungarian troops was drawn up.

"BIG BERTHA"

Two French engineer officers, skilled in the use of rockets, rifle grenades, and shells for the distribution of leaflets, were to join me on the afternoon of the 23rd. Fortunately, I had left little to do on that day. Otherwise I might not have

been able to leave Paris at all. At 7:30 A.M., an air raid alarm was sounded. All shutters were closed and people rushed to the cellars of their houses or hotels. From time to time the sound of a dull explosion could be heard; but, though the sky was cloudless, no German aircraft were to be seen. French airmen scoured the heavens for them without result. Still the explosions continued at intervals of about fifteen minutes, not loud like those of the bombs dropped on London, but long reverberating noises, as though planks were falling from a high scaffolding on to a street pavement.

Towards 11 A.M. I walked through the empty streets to the British Embassy and sat for a while with the Ambassador, Lord Bertie, who was anxious to hear of my mission and to discuss arrangements for the prompt transmission of messages. He was a great diplomatist, a man of courage and character, for whom I felt affectionate admiration. While we were talking, an explosion was heard near the Embassy garden, but again it was not the usual sound of a bomb. I left the Embassy to lunch with a friend but found his wife and family in the cellar. During luncheon at a neighbouring restaurant and throughout the whole afternoon the explosions continued. At 6 P.M. Granville Baker and I were ready to start for the Gare de Lyon but we could find no trace of Emanuel. Presently he turned up breathless, having been kept all day at the French Foreign Office for a visa to his Italian passport because the entire staff had been confined to the cellars on account of the "air raid." Granville Baker was sceptical about the raid. He had examined a hole made in the Tuileries Gardens by a "bomb" and had picked up some of the splinters; and he maintained they were not bomb splinters at all but fragments of a long thick shell. At the Gare de Lyon we got a copy of the *Temps* which stated that, in the opinion of French artillery experts, Paris was being bombarded by a long-range gun apparently from a distance of more than sixty miles.

March 23rd was, indeed, the first day of "Big Bertha's" activity. Until then the existence of a gun with a range of

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100 kilometres had not been suspected. It did little material damage, but it upset my arrangements to the extent of preventing the French engineer officers from joining me until later. Therefore Granville Baker, Emanuel, and I started alone. A few minutes before leaving the hotel a telegram from Northcliffe had reached me. It ran, "Misunderstanding about Seton-Watson now cleared up. He can join you if you wish," and I wired instructions for him to meet me in Rome. Apparently my surmise had been correct. An embargo had been put on him in the hope that I should postpone my departure in order to have it removed; and when it was found that I had nevertheless started, Granville Baker was secretly denounced as "suspect" in order to delay me in Paris. Upon the origin of these intrigues I mused much, as I stood in the corridor of the overcrowded train that bore us southward. Their purpose, at any rate, was clear. It was to prevent effective propaganda against Austria-Hungary.

When the train reached Dijon we found the railway station packed with panic-stricken people whom the news of the bombardment of Paris had convinced that the Germans were at the gates of the capital. We did our best to reassure them; and, after thirty hours' travelling in great discomfort, we reached Milan towards 2 A.M. on Monday morning, March 25th. There the bombardment of Paris and the German advance towards Amiens had caused serious alarm. Senator Albertini of the *Corriere della Sera* was so anxious that no time should be lost in starting propaganda against Austria that he insisted on my going straight to Rome in order to get explicit authority from the Prime Minister, Orlando. Were I to go first to Italian military headquarters near Padua, he declared, I should be delayed, since the Commander-in-Chief, General Diaz, would do nothing unless his responsibility were covered by instructions from the Prime Minister. I took Albertini's advice, sent Granville Baker, and a French Engineer officer who had joined us, to Padua, and started with Emanuel for Rome where Orlando gave me the following letter to General Diaz.

March 27, 1918.

I have the pleasure to present to you Mr. Steed, the eminent journalist of *The Times* and our tried and trusted friend. He is coming [to Headquarters] to do good and useful work, concerted with me, and I am sure that your Excellency will do all in your power to help him.

Signor Nitti, the Minister of the Treasury, also recommended me warmly to General Diaz. Thus accredited, I went to Padua on March 29th, and reported myself to General Delmé-Radcliffe, the head of the British Military Mission, who presented me to General Diaz. As Albertini had predicted, the attitude of Diaz changed after he had read my letters from Orlando and Nitti. He entered into the spirit of my mission and instructed his Chief of Staff, General Badoglio, to summon a full council of the Intelligence officers from the six Italian armies for March 30th.

THE TURNING POINT

At this council, General Badoglio asked me to explain the general objects of my mission. Having done this, I asked that the Italian Intelligence Officers should state their views as to the best means of breaking the cohesion of the Austrian front. All of them agreed that the only way to produce an immediate effect would be for the various National Committees of the subject Hapsburg races to proclaim the political independence of those races, and for the proclamations to be expressly authorized by the British, French, and Italian Governments. Anything short of that, they said, would be merely scratching the surface; and if, as they had reason to believe, an Austrian offensive were due within eleven days, there was not a moment to be lost.

Thus I was put in a tight place. I, too, was convinced that nothing short of proclamations of independence, duly authorized by the Allied governments, could really affect the position; but that was the very thing which the British War Cabinet had forbidden Northcliffe to do. So I told the Intelligence officers that I agreed with them but that I had been

forbidden to sanction promises of independence to the subject Hapsburg races.

"Then there is nothing to be done," they replied in despondent chorus.

"Wait a bit, gentlemen," I said. "If you can give me forty-eight hours, I will see if something cannot be done. In view of the German offensive, it may be possible to have this restriction removed. Meanwhile, let us go ahead and prepare leaflets on the assumption that it will be removed."

General Badoglio concurred. He ordered the Intelligence Officers to submit, within twenty-four hours, draft leaflets in the languages of the Austro-Hungarian troops on the fronts of their respective Italian armies, so that, on receipt of authorization, these leaflets might be printed by the million and made ready for distribution by runners, rifle grenades, rockets, and aëroplanes. I supplied the draft proclamation written by the representatives of the subject races in Paris, and submitted a telegram to M. Clemenceau asking for the delivery at Padua by April 6th of 20,000 French rifle grenades specially made to contain leaflets. General Badoglio for his part ordered the output of Italian rockets for the distribution of leaflets to be increased from 500 to 4,000 a day.

Returning then to the British Military Mission, where General Delmé-Radcliffe had kindly lodged me and my associates, I sent an urgent telegram to Northcliffe saying that, in all the circumstances, it was essential that the British War Cabinet should authorize, without delay, proclamations of Czechoslovak, Polish, Southern Slav, and Rumane independence. So promptly did Northcliffe act that I received the assent of the British War Cabinet within thirty-six hours. Having informed General Badoglio to this effect, I returned to Rome and, through the French Embassy, telegraphed to M. Clemenceau asking for his assent also. Meanwhile, the British Ambassador in Paris, acting on instructions from the War Cabinet through the Foreign Office, had already asked for the assent of the French Government. Clemenceau gave it immediately and informed me through the French Embassy in Rome. I received his reply half an hour after getting

news of his assent through the British Ambassador in Rome — proof that official diplomacy can, on occasion, work smartly.

In the meantime, I made an urgent appeal to Sonnino also to assent to the proclamations. I felt that, unless his opposition were overcome, the whole business might be held up until too late. We had a long and strenuous interview of which the upshot was that he agreed to the proclamations of independence but was unwilling to have it stated that the Italian Government "recognized" them. Still, half a loaf being better than no bread, I sent to Italian Headquarters at Padua instructions for the distribution of the leaflets to begin at once. Thus we saved precious time. By April 7th, three days before the expected Austrian offensive, the distribution of independence leaflets was in full swing along the whole front. Upon their effect I cannot dogmatize. I know only that, according to information obtained in Italy and subsequently confirmed from Austrian sources through the British Intelligence Service in Switzerland, this propaganda, reinforced by the resolutions of the Rome Congress of April 8th, compelled the Austro-Hungarian Command to remove the Slav troops from the front line and to replace them by Austrian-German and Magyar "storm" troops, which were being held in readiness for the offensive. These latter troops, the only unconditionally trustworthy elements in the Austro-Hungarian Army, were immediately subjected to severe bombardment from the Allied lines. The military advantages of upsetting the enemy plans and of wearing down the trustworthy enemy troops, seem thus to have been obtained. In any case, the offensive expected on April 10th did not take place, and we were given time to prepare for further operations.

Before leaving the front to attend the Rome Congress, I had visited the British Headquarters at Lonedo, on the invitation of General Lord Cavan who had succeeded General Sir Herbert Plumer in command of the British Divisions in Italy. I found Lord Cavan installed in an old and half-dismantled Italian château where, by the light of a candle stuck in the neck of a bottle, we discussed propaganda. He confessed

frankly that he knew nothing about it and asked me what we hoped to do. I said we hoped, at least, to save the lives of a few hundred British Tommies, which would be worth doing. He agreed; but asked how. I reminded him of the political officers on the Northwest frontier of India and said that, just as their work saved lives, so we hoped to save lives in Italy. "Whom have you got against you here?" I continued.

"Austrians and Hungarians," answered Lord Cavan.

"That tells me nothing," I said. "Where do they come from? Are they Austrian Germans, or Czechs, or Poles, or Slovaks, or Slovenes, or Magyars, or Croats, or Rumanes, or Italians, or Ruthenes?"

"Blowed if I know," was the reply.

"On the Indian frontier, when some of the tribes are 'up' against us, and the political officers have, sooner or later, to deal with them, do they handle all the various sorts of Pathan, the friendly and the unfriendly, in the same way. Do they not treat, say the Afridis, in one way, the Zakka-Khels in another, the Mohmands in another, to say nothing of the Waziris?"

"Certainly," said Lord Cavan. "But what has that to do with this business?"

"The Austro-Hungarian Army," I answered, "is recruited from some nine different tribes, most of which speak a different language and have different political ideas. Of these tribes, let us say that seven are actually or potentially friendly and that two are vigorously hostile. We propose to leave the hostile tribes alone or, rather, to leave you to deal with them; and we propose to tell the friendly tribes that we are their friends and that, if they will behave like friends, we mean to help them to get what they want. Do you twig?"

"It sounds very interesting," Lord Cavan returned. "You must talk to Mitchell, my Chief Intelligence officer, about it. By the way, could you not get somebody to write for us a sort of child's guide to the Austro-Hungarian Army? We don't know anything about all these 'Yugoslovaks' and 'Czechoslavs.'"

I promised to see what could be done and went off to find the chief Intelligence officer.

"Jolly glad you've come," said Colonel Mitchell, a splendid Irishman from Toronto. "I've been wanting to do something of this sort ever since we came here, but Plumer wouldn't hear of it. He used to say, 'No, Mitchell, it isn't fair. We must fight these fellows.' Did you ever hear anything more British than that?" exclaimed Mitchell with a laugh.

But Mitchell himself could not tell me exactly how the Austro-Hungarian divisions on the British front were composed. He thought the French might know. So back I went to French Headquarters where I found Colonel Jouvain, the French Chief of Staff, as much in the dark as Mitchell himself. He thought Italian General Headquarters might know. Therefore I went farther back to Abano near Padua, where, after rummaging through several Italian military departments in succession, I found an officer who did know. He told me that one of the "Austrian" divisions on the British front contained forty per cent. of Slovenes from Laibach or Lubljana. (These might be susceptible to Southern Slav propaganda in the Slovene language.) A "Hungarian" division, also on the British front, contained eighty-five per cent. of Rumanes from Transylvania, and another "Hungarian" division, opposed to the French, consisted entirely of Croats from Croatia. The Austrian and Hungarian divisions on the Italian front were equally composite. Thus it became possible to graduate our propaganda and to avoid the mistake of distributing, for instance, Croat leaflets among Polish troops or Czech leaflets among Rumanes. Seton-Watson and I afterwards wrote the "child's guide" to the Austro-Hungarian Army for the benefit of British and Allied officers in Italy, so that they might at least know the names of the races composing it.

THE ROME CONGRESS

A Central Inter-Allied Commission was formed at Italian Headquarters to conduct our propaganda. An Italian officer

presided over it, Colonel Granville Baker, a French officer, and delegates from the Southern Slav, Czechoslovak, and Polish National committees were attached to it. But neither the Commission nor any of us would have made much impression on the enemy had not the Rome Congress of the subject Hapsburg peoples proved to be an unqualified success. Up to the last moment the possibility of holding it had been in doubt. Trumbitch, before consenting to come to Italy, had demanded that some offensive references to the Southern Slavs, made by the former Italian Prime Minister, Signor Boselli, should be publicly withdrawn; but Boselli could not be got at in time. Seton-Watson, who had reached Rome after a variegated journey from London, telegraphed a vigorous wigging to Trumbitch whom Professor Borgese finally put into the train in Paris almost by main force. On Sunday, April 7th, the delegates reached Rome, Trumbitch, Beneš, and Štefanik being among them. Franklin-Bouillon came as the chief French delegate, Albert Thomas being also present. The Polish Delegation included M. Skirmunt, afterwards Polish Foreign Minister, while the Rumanian Parliament and the Transylvanian Rumanes were both represented. The Serbian Parliament sent a deputation of twelve of its members, and the Yugoslav division at Salonika a delegation of officers. When the success of the Congress was assured and it was clear that the Torre-Trumbitch "Pact of Rome" would be integrally adopted, the Italian public men who had promoted the Congress were anxious that some member of the Italian Government should take part in the final proceedings. Therefore they asked me, as an old friend of Sonnino, to beg him either to attend the Congress himself or to sanction the presence at it of some Italian minister, preferably the Vice-Premier, Bissolati, who was in complete sympathy with its objects. Though I had already made a similar request to Sonnino without success, I undertook this final mission and saw him at his house. Once more we thrashed out the whole question. At one moment he was almost persuaded to accompany me to the Capitol where the Congress was sitting, and I have sometimes thought that, had I been a little firmer with him, I might have

carried him off in triumph. But he implored me not to push him too hard and said:

"I do not accuse you of having invented the Southern Slav question in order to bother me, for what you are saying to-day you wrote in your 'Hapsburg Monarchy' in 1913. But I wish it did not exist. Though I could not altogether approve of this Congress before it met, and thought it would not succeed, I have done nothing to prevent it from meeting, and I recognize that it has succeeded. But I cannot, without weakening my own position, sanction the attendance at it of any other Italian minister. If you speak this afternoon you may say that 'all Italian statesmen now in office, without exception, are in hearty sympathy with the aims of the Congress and desire its success.' I feel that I am a truer friend of the subject Hapsburg peoples than many who to-day openly proclaim their friendship, and that the moment will come when I shall make to them concessions which I should perhaps be entitled not to make. But it is contrary to my character to run after popularity, and to seem to exploit manifestations with which the Government has not been officially associated from the outset. Besides, I should compromise the Government and expose it to attacks from various quarters were I publicly to tear up the Treaty of London, the only 'scrap of paper' that exists to-day between Italy and her Allies."

After the chief delegates of the various countries and races had spoken at the final sitting, and I was asked to speak on behalf of England, I made the declaration which Sonnino had authorized. It was received with acclamation as a sign that the resistance of the Italian Foreign Office to a policy incompatible with the Treaty of London had almost disappeared and that propaganda against Austria-Hungary could therefore go forward without hindrance.

This interpretation was premature, as the event was to prove; and, in any case, Sonnino's declaration was not explicit enough to serve as an official Italian endorsement of the policy of independence for the subject Hapsburg peoples. On the morrow, when the Italian Prime Minister, Orlando,

received the chief delegates to the Congress and associated himself with its resolutions, I asked him, therefore, whether his acceptance of the resolutions and of the "Pact of Rome" might be taken as the bestowal of Italian official sanction upon the declarations of independence made by the National Committees of the oppressed Austro-Hungarian nationalities. He replied affirmatively. Thus we were able to push on our propaganda with the official authority of the British, French, and Italian governments.

HOMEWARD BOUND

From Rome I returned once more to the Italian front, helped to complete the organization of the Central Inter-Allied Commission, saw Lord Cavan again and took part in another Conference with the Intelligence Officers of the Italian armies. General Diaz, the Commander-in-Chief, thanked me warmly for the work the Mission had done, and promised to give our propaganda every support. On April 20th, Seton-Watson, Emanuel, and I left for Paris, Granville Baker remaining to help in carrying on the work. Unfortunately, hitches soon occurred and it became clear that, once the danger of an immediate Austrian offensive had been removed, the Italian authorities were by no means as whole-hearted as they had appeared to be at the beginning of April. Nevertheless, the propaganda went on and steadily undermined the cohesion of the Austro-Hungarian Army.

In Paris I learned something of the sequel to the intrigues against my Mission. General Spears assured me that, had I not been personally acquainted with Clemenceau and had I spoken French less fluently, I should never have got away from Paris at all in March; or, had I got away, so strong an atmosphere of suspicion would have surrounded me that I should have been unable to accomplish anything. I understood more fully what he meant when I heard that, as soon as I had started from Paris on March 23rd, Lieutenant Tonnelat had been arrested and court-martialled for the crime of having informed me that I had been denounced from London.

He had narrowly escaped severe punishment. I learned also that, besides the denunciation of Granville Baker for having "served in the Germany Army," I, too, had been denounced as pro-Austrian because I had "lived many years in Austria." And it became clearer to me through what channels Emanuel, who was a teetotaller and had been constantly with me, was denounced to General Delmé-Radcliffe, the head of the British Military Mission in Italy, as "having been drunk and disorderly at Milan and, therefore, untrustworthy."

Thus we had all received attentions from the pro-Austrian intriguers. Though I have a shrewd notion of the identity of some of them, and of the means of communication which they employed, I cannot, in the absence of documentary proof, mention their names. They were certainly men of influence with access to the military telephone system in England and France. But I do not think that these men would have ventured to do what they did had they not felt sure of powerful backing.

On returning to London I reported myself at once to Lord Northcliffe and saw Mr. Balfour, who thanked me officially for the work done. To him I gave a full account of the intrigues against the Mission. He threw up his hands exclaiming, "This is black treachery! We must go to the bottom of it." I reported it also to General Sir George Macdonogh, the Director of Military Intelligence, who appeared genuinely shocked and promised a strict enquiry. Mr. Lloyd George invited me to breakfast but made no comment when I told him of the intrigues. He only said:

"I cannot understand how you got such results in so short a time."

"When a lever is applied at the right moment in the proper way, big weights can be moved," I answered.

"Well," he replied, "I don't mind telling you that I was in favour of trying to make peace with Austria."

"Then, my dear Prime Minister," I returned, "you ought to thank God that you were prevented from ruining the whole Allied cause."

Naturally, nothing came of the various enquiries promised

into the intrigues. But I had the double consolation of having done something worth doing at a total cost to the public exchequer of £350. Neither Seton-Watson, Emanuel, nor I took any salary, and Granville Baker got only his army pay.

Much, however, remained to be done. While in Paris on my way back to London I had conferred with General Sackville-West at Versailles, and with General Bliss, the representative of the United States Army, and was asked to meet a number of Allied officers to discuss the actual position of the Czechoslovak forces in Russia. As I found that the Allied military organization at Versailles had no contact with the Czechoslovak National Council, I took Beneš and Seton-Watson to Versailles, where the position of the Czechoslovak forces was considered; and Beneš remained thereafter in close contact with the Versailles Council. I also secured an undertaking from M. Clemenceau that the picked Italian divisions which had been sent to the French front should be utilized in actual fighting as soon as possible. Clemenceau readily agreed that if the Italian troops in France were known to have repulsed a German attack or to have been successful in a limited offensive against the Germans on the Western front, the Italian troops in Italy would be more likely to withstand an eventual repetition of the Caporetto tactics should German " storm troops " again be used against them.

BACKSLIDING

After reports of the Rome Congress had reached the United States, Mr. Lansing, the Secretary of State, declared officially, on May 29*th*, that the proceedings of the Congress " have been followed with great interest by the Government of the United States, and that the nationalistic aspirations of the Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs for freedom have the earnest sympathy of this Government." In comparison with President Wilson's " Fourteen Points " of January 8, 1918, this statement was a long step forward. President Wilson had said, " the peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the first opportunity of autonomous development."

The expression " autonomous development " had spread dismay among the subject Austro-Hungarian races, which knew by bitter experience that " autonomy " under the Hapsburgs might be but a cloak for the reality of arbitrary rule. Therefore they hailed Mr. Lansing's declaration, which our propaganda utilized, as tantamount to the adhesion of the United States to the resolutions of the Rome Congress. The French and British Governments interpreted it in the same way and, at an Allied Conference in Paris on June 3rd, proposed to issue a joint Franco-British-Italian declaration in favour of Polish, Czechoslovak, and Yugoslav independence. But they met with determined opposition on the part of Baron Sonnino, who refused to go beyond Mr. Lansing's statement. The declarations actually authorized on June 3rd by the British, French, and Italian governments therefore ran:

(1) The creation of a united and independent Polish State with free access to the sea constitutes one of the conditions of a solid and just peace and of the rule of right in Europe.

(2) The Allied Governments have noted with pleasure the declaration made by the Secretary of State of the United States Government and desire to associate themselves in an expression of earnest sympathy for the nationalistic aspirations towards freedom of the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav peoples.

Both M. Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, and his British colleague, Mr. Balfour, were astonished at Baron Sonnino's attitude. M. Pichon expressed his surprise that " the Italian Government should now be more Austrophil than either the British or the French Government; and, as Sonnino remained obdurate, the British and French Foreign Ministers reserved their right to make ulterior statements on behalf of their respective Governments. Mr. Lansing, for his part, sought to drive Sonnino forward by issuing, on June 28th, the following addition to his earlier statement:

Since the issuance by this Government on May 29 of the statement regarding the nationalistic aspirations for freedom of the Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs, German and Austrian officials and sympathizers have sought to misinterpret and distort its manifest interpretation. In order that there may be no misunderstanding concerning the meaning of the statement, the Secretary of State has

to-day further announced the position of the United States Government to be that all branches of the Slav race should be completely freed from German and Austrian rule.

But the harm had already been done. Sonnino had blunted the edge of the Rome Congress resolutions. At the beginning of June a Yugoslav division of the Austro-Hungarian Army had been on the point of coming over to the Allies. In the latter part of April and throughout May, hundreds of Czechoslovak and Yugoslav soldiers had sought refuge in the Allied lines, bringing with them our propaganda leaflets as passports. Some of them had volunteered to go back into the Austrian lines, in order to carry on our propaganda among their comrades and to return with precise information of the enemy dispositions and of the hour of the intended offensive. But when the Franco-British-Italian declaration of June 3rd was issued, the Austrian authorities seized upon it as proof that the Allies had gone back upon the resolutions of the Rome Congress and were merely fooling the subject Hapsburg peoples. Thus the Yugoslav troops were deterred from coming over in masses; and though many individual Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs actually came over on June 12th and 13th, bringing information of great value as to enemy gun positions and ammunition dumps, the harm Sonnino had wrought could not be undone before the Austrian offensive on the Piave was launched on June 15th. The Austrian-German and the Magyar troops then fought with great determination and made some headway; but once their initial onrush had been stayed, the issue was not in doubt. The Austro-Hungarian Army was heavily, though not decisively beaten. Had Baron Sonnino assented to the declarations which M. Pichon and Mr. Balfour wished to make on June 3rd, the Piave battle would probably have ended in a complete Austro-Hungarian disaster and the war would have been shortened by some months.

PROPAGANDA IN ITALY

Though Mr. Lansing's supplementary statement of June 28th came too late to affect the Piave battle, it encouraged

Mr. Balfour and M. Pichon to publish, early in July, an exchange of telegrams when colours were presented to the Czechoslovak Army in France. On that occasion M. Pichon also referred publicly to the creation of a Yugoslav State. From these manifestations Baron Sonnino significantly held aloof. His attitude had, indeed, become so equivocal that when, towards the middle of June, Lord Northcliffe was asked by the Government to take over British propaganda in Italy and consulted me about it, I advised him not to accept the offer until I should have secured from the Italian Prime Minister a definite assurance that Italian policy had not changed. In any case, I urged, we ought not to undertake propaganda in an Allied country in the same sense as we were conducting propaganda against the enemy, but rather to form a small committee in London which could promote Italian interests and work in harmony with a pro-British committee in Rome. Therefore I wrote to Signor Orlando, on June 15th, a very frank letter which the Italian Ambassador forwarded. Its conclusion ran:

> Your Excellency knows my conviction that there can be neither security nor development nor real independence for Italy outside the policy laid down by your Excellency in your speech of adhesion to the Rome Congress; that any other policy more restricted and not aiming at a complete victory of the Allies is semi-defeatism; and, before going on with the work which has been offered to Lord Northcliffe, I wish to be certain that I shall not be deceiving myself if I take that speech and that policy as the cardinal principles of my activities.

To this letter I received a few days later a reply from Orlando in a telegram addressed to the Italian Ambassador in London. It ran:

> Tell Steed that my policy remains, and will remain, the policy we agreed upon at Rome, whatever the consequences may be.

PACIFISM IN ENGLAND

How the Italian Prime Minister kept his word will presently appear. We, at least, kept ours. We formed, at Crewe House

" a Committee of Action for Italy " and did everything possible to promote Italian interests. My own activities were, early in June, temporarily hampered by an omnibus in Piccadilly, which knocked me down and left me much the worse for wear. Thus I forsook Crewe House by day and *The Times* office by night, and worked uncomfortably in bed. While there, I had a visit on June 13th from a young Englishman of literary standing and connected with the Labour Party. He had been seconded from military duty for special service in an important neutral country and, after a strenuous year, had come home on leave. Finding me bruised and bandaged, he tactfully wrote what he had wished to say, and his letter was so startling that action had to be taken at once. It stated that he had heard, on unimpeachable authority, that some members of the War Cabinet had embraced the idea of a negotiated peace with Germany mainly at the expense of Russia. Mr. Lloyd George had not accepted the idea offhand but had arranged to discuss it with some members of the Labour Party, particularly Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb, whom Mr. Lloyd George met at Lord Haldane's house. When Mr. Lloyd George found that the Webbs would have nothing to do with it, he had suggested that they should talk to Lord Milner about it, which they declined to do. Later on, Lord Haldane reopened the subject at the Webbs' house in conversation with the Belgian Socialist, Camille Huysmans, who, however, declared that so far from being acceptable to the International Socialists, the notion was " too infamous even for Scheidemann " (the German Socialist leader). But, early in June, Lord Lansdowne had discussed the idea with his supporters at a private meeting and had announced that he had drafted a second letter proposing, in effect, to leave Germany a free hand in Eastern Europe. This letter he would send to the press as soon as any new German peace move should provide an occasion. Lord Lansdowne added that he was very confident of success this time because he had the private support of " influential members of the War Cabinet itself." He also stated (which was a fact) that the German Government had definitely proposed, at the end of May, 1918, that the im-

pending Anglo-German negotiations at the Hague upon the treatment of prisoners of war should be made the occasion of informal peace negotiations, and that Germany would be ready to offer very favourable terms. This proposal, Lord Lansdowne added, had been rejected; but he was assured that the rejection was not of a very determined sort, and that the German Government would renew the attempt, publicly or privately, in the near future.

"In effect," my correspondent continued, "most of the leading members of the War Cabinet are just 'afraid.' Their fear does not attach itself to anything definite, to any specific prospect of danger, but is simply loss of nerve. Now, as a visitor to my native country, nothing has impressed me more than the amazingly healthy state of public opinion in England about the war. It seems to me to be far more strong and solid and clear-minded than it was when I left a year ago. But, if the public is far steadier than I expected, our rulers are far worse. They seem *rotten,* and to have lost all their pluck, if ever they had any. However, there is still *The Times!* I have never been a Northcliffe enthusiast but I am certainly leaving England with the feeling that, amongst those in high places he, more than any, deserves the confidence of those of us who mean to see the thing through. Of course we *shall* see it through; but heaven knows *how,* with such a crew in Whitehall."

I sent at once for Northcliffe's private secretary, had three copies of this letter made, and despatched them to Northcliffe, Mr. Balfour, and Mr. W. M. Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia, respectively. Mr. Balfour told the bearer that the letter "appalled him." Mr. Hughes telephoned to say that he was fully aware of the situation and had been fighting against it, but was almost powerless. Northcliffe telephoned from the country to ask what I could suggest; and I told him that I thought a sensational leading article in the *Daily Mail* would be the best means of spoiling the intrigue, if intrigue there was. An article in *The Times* might cause too much alarm. He asked me to dictate the article and send it to him. It appeared in the *Daily Mail* of June 18th and ran as follows:

WATCH LANSDOWNE—AND OTHERS

Herr von Kühlmann, it seems, is talking to German Grand Dukes and minor Kings about Alsace-Lorraine. When he last mentioned the subject in the Reichstag he said that the only German answer to any demand for Alsace-Lorraine must be "Never!" Has anything happened to change his views? The great offensive in the West has, so far, disappointed German hopes. The great Austrian offensive seems unlikely to revive them. There remains the great peace offensive, which is the third string to the German bow.

Launched by Herr von Kühlmann, we know what it would mean. He is an "Easterner," who thinks it would be worth Germany's while to buy off England and France by evacuating Belgium and even restoring Alsace-Lorraine (for the time being) on condition that Germany should be given "a free hand" in Russia and the East.

Is he preparing some such offer as this? Has he any ground for supposing any British statesmen to be so stupid as not to see that with a "free hand in Russia and the East" Germany could, a few years hence, turn against the West with redoubled strength, reconquer Belgium, reannex Alsace-Lorraine, and place England herself in the direst peril?

We should like to be sure that the cunning German diplomatist has no such ground. Lord Lansdowne's motley supporters are whispering that another Lansdowne letter, proposing to give Germany a free hand in Eastern Europe, is already drafted and will be sent to the press as soon as a new German peace move provides an occasion. They add that the frightened Marquis is confident of success this time because he has "the private support of influential members of the Government." This sounds frankly incredible.

Our ministers may be weak and foolish, but we have no right to think them traitors; and traitors they would be were they to listen, even for an instant, to any idea of giving Germany "a free hand in the East." They would deserve to be, as they probably would be, hanged by their indignant fellow countrymen and countrywomen, who would not suffer the war to end in so shameful a betrayal.

But Lansdowne, Haldane, and others are meeting and talking. They are alluding knowingly to the Prisoners Conference at the Hague as likely to bring us a German "peace offer on very favourable terms."

We strongly advise all members of the War Cabinet, and, indeed, all important Ministers, to state without delay in plain, unequivocal language that they have never had, have not, and will not have any truck whatever with any idea of purchasing a trumpery "peace" in the West by giving Germany "a free hand in the East."

We had expected a furious outburst in the pacifist organs against this article. There was none. They suddenly became silent. Northcliffe telephoned to me, "We have hit the bull's-eye." Lord Lansdowne's second letter did not appear; but six weeks later (on July 31st) he addressed to a meeting of his followers a pale version of it, consisting solely of pious platitudes. In it he said, "We shall be told that the moment when the Allied Armies are achieving glorious success in the field is not the moment for even hinting at the possibility of peace." The truth was that the Allied counter-offensive of July 18th under General Foch had finally quashed the pacifist intrigue.

CHAPTER XVI

THE DAWN

1918

TO me, the six months between the Allied counter-defensive of July 18, 1918, and the meeting of the Peace Conference in Paris on January 16, 1919, seem the most tragic period of the war. In it, hopes long deferred were fulfilled, faith tenaciously held was vindicated. The chance was offered of building a new world on firmer foundations, and vistas of achievement greater than military victory gladdened the eyes of the Allied peoples. But the chance was missed, men mighty in war became petty in peace, selfishness chilled generosity, and eyes that had gazed in rapture upon a beatific vision from afar were dazzled into blindness at its approach.

No man can yet tell the story of those months. Yet they hold the main secret of the failures of the Peace Conference. What I know I shall write. When others in turn have told what they know and when archives are opened to scrutiny, much of the truth, though by no means all, will be revealed. My own "minor chronicle" can record but an infinitesimal part of it.

From July to October, 1918, I was engaged mainly on propaganda against the enemy by day and on my work as foreign editor of *The Times* by night. During my mission to Italy in the spring, and in the course of the summer, Crewe House had developed propaganda against Germany, Mr. H. G. Wells being at first in charge of the German Department. With him was associated Mr. J. W. Headlam-Morley; while Mr. S. A. Guest, who had long striven single-handed to organize the distribution of British propaganda literature in enemy countries, acted as their technical adviser. As liaison officer with the War Office, Captain Chalmers Mitchell, the well-

known scientist and zoölogist, rendered help which became more and more efficient, just as Mr. C. J. Phillips of the Foreign Office, who had been seconded from the Board of Education, kept Crewe House in touch with the diplomatic service and secured for us the advantage of access to confidential despatches and telegrams. His clear-headed shrewdness, like the wide knowledge of Chalmers Mitchell, proved to be of the utmost value. They spared neither time nor effort in pushing on the work.

PROPAGANDA AGAINST GERMANY

By the end of May Mr. H. G. Wells produced a voluminous memorandum which was boiled down into a letter from Lord Northcliffe to Mr. Balfour asking for the assent of the Government to the general scheme of ideas which it set forth. This letter, which formed our general charter, urged that we should not put forward, for propaganda purposes, aims which the Allies did not really intend to secure; but it argued that Allied war aims were of a nature to strengthen such opposition to the war as existed in Germany if they were presented in a suitable form. The German people, it contended, were acquiescing in a continuance of the German offensive in the West because they had been assured by their leaders that thus only could a speedy peace be attained. Therefore Allied propaganda should tell them of the immutable will of Allied nations to continue the war, no matter at what cost, and to render the commercial blockade more stringent than ever. At the same time, the German people should be assured that the Allies did not desire to impose a peace that would involve the internal ruin of Germany. Such ruin would result if Germany continued to pursue the policy of subjecting Europe to her domination. It could, however, be avoided if the German nation would forgo this policy and accept the Allied scheme for a new organization of the world.

Thus, Lord Northcliffe's letter suggested, our propaganda would contain for the German people an element of fear and an element of hope. It continued:

I take it that the real object of the Allies is, after defeating Germany, to establish such a world peace as shall, within the limits of human foresight, preclude another conflagration. It seems necessary, therefore, that the separate aims which would, of course, be maintained, such as the restoration of Belgium, the liberation of Alsace-Lorraine, the establishment of civilized government in Mesopotamia and Palestine, should be put forward in their proper places as individual but essential points in the general scheme for the settlement of world-politics on a basis which would go far to remove the causes of future wars.

Any such scheme would, in effect, amount to the constitution of a "League of Free Nations." It is, I presume, generally understood that eventually Germany would be invited to take her place in such a League on condition that she accepted the principles of its foundation. Her admission to the League would be in itself her guarantee against the establishment of, *e.g.*, a hostile monopoly of raw materials. Our terms of peace, therefore, can be represented as the conditions on which Germany should be invited to take her part in such a league. In order to secure the economic benefits, she would have to accept the political conditions. If this is so, the task of propaganda is greatly lightened, for it would be easier to put our aims in such a form as to make them to some extent acceptable to the moderate elements in Germany than if they were put forward merely as terms to be imposed on a defeated enemy. . . .

I am well aware of the very great practical difficulties which are bound to arise so soon as an attempt is made to give formal expression to the general idea of a "League of Free Nations." But, for the purposes of our work, it is of the most urgent importance that some statement of this kind should be put forward at the earliest possible date. Such a statement would in effect be an offer to the Germans of peace on stated conditions. If it were accepted, Germany would be able, shortly after the conclusion of the war, to come into the new society of nations; if it were refused, the war would have to continue. But it should also be made clear to the German peoples that the privilege of admission to this society would inevitably be postponed for a period proportionate to the length of time that they continued the war.

To this letter Mr. Balfour replied on June 11:

Your important letter on propaganda in Germany must, I think, be brought before the Cabinet. On a cursory reading I can say that I am in general agreement with the line of thought, but I notice that you make no specific mention of a very difficult question — the German colonies.

Thus Mr. Balfour raised one of the most difficult questions of the peace problem — the one with which German propaganda had made play in France and other countries at the beginning of 1917 as a means of sowing distrust among the Allies. As Northcliffe was unwell, we drafted for him, after careful consideration, a reply which was submitted, like his first letter, to the War Cabinet and received official approval. Its principal passage ran:

I have no settled views as to the future of what were the German colonies, beyond a very strong conviction that they must never again be allowed to fall, for any military or naval purpose, under German control. But, broadly, my feeling is this: The whole situation of the Allies in regard to Germany is governed by the fact that Germany is responsible for the war. The Allies are, therefore, entitled to demand from her restitution, reparation, and guarantees as preliminary conditions of any peace settlement. The territories which the Allies have taken from Germany in the course of their legitimate self-defence, do not come into the same category as the territories seized by Germany, and the allies of Germany, in the course of their predatory aggression. To contemplate barter or exchange between one set of territories and the other would be to assimilate, by implication, the moral situation of the Allies to that of Germany. Therefore, however closely we may study the question, or rather the questions — for there are several — of the German colonies, we ought to make it clear that the ultimate settlement of those questions will be reserved for treatment by the Allies as a fighting league of free nations, or by the general League of Nations, should the behaviour of Germany entitle her to admission to it in time to take part in any scheme of world reorganization.

Thus we were able to go ahead. Though Mr. Wells left us in July as a protest against a government regulation which excluded one of his assistants, as the son of an alien, from official employment, Mr. Hamilton Fyfe took his place and carried on the work with marked ability. He, Chalmers Mitchell, Phillips, Seton-Watson, Guest, and I met daily as a sort of executive committee, while Sir Campbell Stuart, whom we nicknamed the "Senior Wangler" on account of his ability in "getting round" recalcitrant officials and departments, acted as Northcliffe's deputy chairman. In our dealings with the Treasury, Mr. Kent, the Crewe House accountant,

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helped us to avoid many of the difficulties in which the Ministry of Information under Lord Beaverbrook became involved; and ultimately, he compiled a record of our work which Sir Campbell Stuart published in 1920 under the somewhat melodramatic title of "The Secrets of Crewe House."

By the time the Allied counter-offensive in France had developed, early in August, 1918, more than 100,000 of our propaganda leaflets were being dropped daily over and beyond the German lines. Written in good, simple German they told the truth which was being concealed from the German troops. They gave information of the progress of the war on all fronts, showed, by means of shaded maps, the ground the Allies had gained, gave a full record of German losses, and recorded the progressive increase of the American Army in Europe. The chief method of distribution was by small balloons each of which could carry about four pounds' weight of leaflets. A string passing round separate bundles of leaflets was fastened to the neck of the balloon, a slow fuse being attached to the string so that it should be burned through at the proper moment. By this means, bundles of leaflets were released gradually. Luckily, the wind blew mainly from the south-west during the summer and autumn, so that our balloons sometimes floated 150 miles into enemy territory; though the bulk of our leaflets fell in the German trenches or in an area of from ten to fifteen miles behind the German front.

German army orders and the German press soon gave evidence of the efficacy of this propaganda. On August 25th, the German Ministry of War admitted that "in propaganda the enemy is doubtless our superior," while the *Deutsche Tageszeitung* wrote, "We Germans have a right to be proud of our General Staff. We have a feeling that our enemies' General Staff cannot hold a candle to it; but we have also the feeling that our enemies have a brilliant Propaganda General Staff, whereas we have none." On August 20th, the Roman Catholic organ at Cologne, the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, published a letter from the front which contained the following passage:

Our enemies have recently been very busy distributing leaflets from the air. I have had two of these leaflets in my hands, and it is not to be doubted that our enemies are our masters also in this, for the leaflets are so well produced that the unwary are very likely to fall victims to them.

The real trouble was that the leaflets were not only well produced but that they told the strict truth. From the first, Crewe House propaganda had been based upon the truth — truth as to policy, truth as to facts, truth as to intentions. Lying propaganda defeats itself sooner or later. The superior veracity of events destroys it. When German troops who had lost ground on one section of the front found, two days later, the extent of their losses accurately given and illustrated in our leaflets, the leaflets naturally carried conviction, even when they revealed other enemy losses of which the troops in that section had heard nothing. Little by little, our leaflets came to be awaited by the German troops as trustworthy daily bulletins of the course of the fighting. This the German semi-official organ, the *Kölnische Zeitung*, admitted on September 11th when it wrote, " In our dear Fatherland to-day we have great numbers of innocent and ingenuous minds who doubt the plain statements of the German army reports but believe the false reports and omissions of the enemy "; and by October 20th the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* issued " Ten Commandments for German Women," of which one was, " Warn your brothers, your sons, your husbands, not to believe the enemy's leaflets."

Seven weeks earlier, at the beginning of September, Marshal Hindenburg himself had issued a warning manifesto against our work. One of its passages ran:

We should not take this plan of the enemy lightly. He conducts his campaign against our spirit by various means. He bombards our fronts, not only with a drumfire of artillery but also with a drumfire of printed paper. Besides bombs which kill the body, his airmen throw down leaflets which are intended to kill the soul.

Of these enémy leaflets our men handed in:

In May	84,000
In June	120,000
In July	300,000

A gigantic increase! 10,000 poisoned arrows daily in July; 10,000 times daily an attempt to deprive the individual, and the army as a whole, of belief in the justice of our cause, and of the strength and confidence for ultimate victory! We can reckon in addition that a great proportion of the enemy leaflets will not have been found by us.

Hindenburg's figures may be supplemented. In August, 3,958,116 leaflets were issued from Crewe House; in September, 3,715,000; in October, 5,360,000, and in the first ten days of November, 1,400,000. The distribution ceased on November 11th, the day of the Armistice.

Despite denunciations of our propaganda by General von Hutier, commanding the Sixth German Army, and others, our propaganda gained increasingly the confidence of the German troops by the truthfulness of its statements. Von Hutier called Northcliffe "The Minister for the Destruction of German Confidence," defined him as "the most thoroughgoing rascal of all the Entente" who had been "given billions to use in influencing opinion in the interior of the country and at the fronts by means of paid agents." The "billions" existed only in von Hutier's imagination, for the total cost of Crewe House propaganda, from first to last, including the cost of its work in Italy which was ably carried on by Mr. Gerald O'Donovan, was little more than £70,000. In a war which was costing Great Britain £7,000,000 a day, this bill for nine months' work on fronts extending from the North Sea to the Balkans was not excessive.

PROPAGANDA AGAINST BULGARIA

In point of fact the work in the Balkans was negative rather than positive. On May 25, 1918, we drafted for Lord Northcliffe a letter to Mr. Balfour asking for a government decision upon Allied policy in regard to Balkan countries before we could begin definite propaganda against Bulgaria. The letter urged that, without such a policy, any propaganda in Bulgaria would resolve itself into competitive bargaining between the Allies on the one hand and the Austro-Germans on the other, which would tend to estrange and dishearten the Serbians, the

Rumanes, and the Greeks. In such bargaining the Allies would be at a disadvantage inasmuch as Bulgaria already occupied, as a member of the enemy Alliance, considerably more than all the territories that would be the subject of the bargaining. It added:

> The aim of Allied policy in the Balkans should be a lasting territorial and political settlement framed, as nearly as possible, on lines of ethnography, with the object of paving the way for a permanent League of the Balkan Nations.
>
> Bulgaria cannot possess all the territories ethnographically Bulgarian unless she retain, at the peace, districts held by Serbia, Greece, and Rumania, before the war. Serbia, Greece, and Rumania, on the other hand, cannot fairly be asked or compelled to abandon those districts unless they, in their turn, be united with territories ethnographically Serbo-Croatian [Yugoslav] Greek, and Rumanian.
>
> Allied policy should therefore deliberately aim at the solution of the Southern Slav, Hellenic, and Rumanian questions in the sense of the fullest possible racial unity and independence.
>
> The chief difficulty in defining the just claims of Bulgaria lies in the uncertainty as to the proper delimitation of Bulgarian Macedonia. A purely ethnographical delimitation might involve economic and strategical injustice to Serbia and Greece unless it were accompanied by due provision, internationally guaranteed, for Serbian and Greek rights of way. Similarly, the retention of ports like Salonika and Kavalla by Greece would involve hardship to Bulgaria unless adequate provision, internationally guaranteed, were made for a Bulgarian right of way to those ports.
>
> Should it prove impossible to obtain, by persuasion or pressure, the assent of Serbia and Greece to the retention of ethnographical Macedonia by Bulgaria, an autonomous Macedonia might be set up, proper provision being made for the maintenance of order and for the repression of armed Serbian and Greek or Bulgarian "propaganda" by an international force of gendarmerie. One advantage of an autonomous Macedonia would be that it would meet the wishes of the Macedonian Bulgars themselves, who would prefer autonomy to annexation outright by Bulgaria.

On June 6th Mr. Balfour expressed full agreement with the general idea underlying this policy and added, "I feel, indeed, that it will be of value if our own efforts in this direction which, for obvious reasons, can at present be only of the most tentative nature, are preceded by discreet and intelligent

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propaganda such as will not only appeal to our enemies but enlighten our friends."

In practice we found, however, that the absence of a definite Balkan policy on the part of Allied governments and, in particular, the backsliding of Italy from the basis of the Rome Congress, made positive propaganda against Bulgaria almost impossible. Therefore we restricted our work to definite intimations to the Bulgarians that unless their policy were completely reversed, the Allies would do nothing at the peace to save them from the fate that was in store for them; and they were told that four conditions were indispensable as preliminaries to the establishment of any relations between the Allies and Bulgaria. These were:

(a) The expulsion of King Ferdinand and his family;
(b) A complete rupture with Germany;
(c) Establishment of a democratic government;
(d) The orientation of Bulgarian policy in the direction of a Balkan Confederation under the ægis of the Allied Powers and of the United States.

These conditions were drafted at Crewe House in reply to secret overtures which had been made to us by Bulgarian emissaries claiming to speak for the new Prime Minister, M. Malinoff; and we were authorized by the Foreign Office to convey through those emissaries a message that "Until Bulgaria has given proof that a complete reversal of her policy has actually been brought about, we are not prepared to entertain any suggestions from her." This message was not without its effect both upon the Malinoff Government and upon other Bulgarian emissaries who were seeking to negotiate with our representatives in Switzerland. At the same time, Seton-Watson and I were authorized by the Foreign Office to reassure the Greek and Serbian representatives in London by telling them of our attitude towards the Bulgarian overtures. We began also to prepare for the publication of a newspaper in Bulgarian which was to be smuggled into Bulgaria; but before this could be done, news came that Bulgaria had surrendered.

SERBIAN WAR AIMS

It was, indeed, necessary to reassure the Serbians and the Greeks who had been disquieted by rumours of secret negotiations between Bulgaria and the Western Allies. The reorganization of the Greek Army by M. Venizelos, and the reconstruction of a Serbian Army, reinforced by some Yugoslav contingents, at Salonika, would have been endangered by a belief that the Allies were selling the pass to the enemy. Yet the attitude of the Serbian Government and, particularly, that of M. Pashitch was by no means satisfactory. Side by side with the defection of Italy from the policy of the Rome Congress of subject Hapsburg races, ran the defection of M. Pashitch from the Declaration of Corfu which had foreshadowed a united Yugoslav State on the basis of complete political and religious equality between Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. On this point there was a marked difference between the Serbian Minister in London, M. Jovan Jovanovitch, and M. Pashitch. At a Mansion House meeting held on July 25, 1818, M. Jovanovitch had officially defined Serbian War aims to be:

(1) The independence and unity of all Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in a single State;
(2) "The Balkans for the Balkan peoples" and a reconstruction of the Balkan League;
(3) Reparation for the ravaged Yugoslav districts;
(4) Economic and intellectual intercourse with the Entente.

Mr. Balfour, who spoke at this meeting, associated himself, as Foreign Secretary, with these aims. He criticized Austria-Hungary more frankly than any other British Minister had hitherto done, and recognized the Austrian problem as the key to European reconstruction, and the case of Yugoslavia as a test of Allied sincerity in regard to its solution. The Italian Ambassador, the Marquis Imperiali, sat by Mr. Balfour's side and tugged at Mr. Balfour's coat whenever he thought the enunciation of British policy likely to displease Baron Sonnino. I watched this by-play and noted that, at

several points, it checked the flow of Mr. Balfour's thought. Therefore, when it was my turn to speak as acting-Chairman of the Serbian Society of Great Britain, I said unreservedly what I felt Mr. Balfour would have wished to say had his freedom of speech not been hampered; and I was amused to see Mr. Balfour applaud vigorously the most downright passages in my speech. Nevertheless, Mr. Balfour had said enough to make it clear that the full Yugoslav programme had the sympathy and support of the British Government.

Doctor Beneš, who had been acting as Foreign Minister in the Czechoslovak National Council, was also on the platform and likewise associated himself fully with the statement of Serbian war aims. He had come to London to obtain from the British Government official recognition of the Czechoslovak National Council, consisting of Professor Masaryk, himself and General Štefanik, as the Provisional Government of the future Czechoslovak State. M. Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, had already recognized them on behalf of the French Government "as the first basis of the future Czechoslovak Government." Beneš therefore hoped that the British Government would likewise grant recognition on the same terms, so that he might telegraph the news to Masaryk at Washington where the United States Government, in its turn, was disposed to grant recognition as soon as France and England should have granted it.

A MYSTICAL WORD

On the evening of his arrival, Beneš brought to me, at *The Times* office, the French formula of recognition and asked whether I thought Mr. Balfour and Lord Robert Cecil would make any difficulty about granting British recognition forthwith. I advised him to try, and promised him all the help I could give. Next evening he returned, looking very disconsolate. He had discussed the question at great length with Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. Balfour, who had declined to accept the French formula or to promise immediate recognition. They had argued that for Great Britain to recognize the

Czecholsovak National Council "as the first basis" of the future Government of an independent Czechoslovak State would be to curtail the freedom of the Czechoslovak people to choose another government should they wish to do so; and that it was indispensable that the subject Hapsburg Races should be left quite free to determine their own form of government.

Beneš could not understand this reasoning. He knew that Masaryk, Štefanik, and he possessed the full confidence of the Czechoslovak people and of the Czechoslovak Legion that was then fighting its way through Siberia towards Vladivostok; and he feared that some unconfessed object might lie behind British official reluctance.

"Is that the only objection that Balfour and Robert Cecil raised?" I asked.

"That is the only one they mentioned," answered Beneš.

"Then you will get your recognition to-morrow," I replied.

Beneš jumped for joy.

"Have they told you that?" he asked eagerly.

"No," I said, "they have told me nothing; but, if that is the only objection, we can remove it with one word. Give me your formula."

Beneš handed me the document he had discussed with Mr. Balfour and Lord Robert Cecil. I put my pen through the words "as the first basis of" and wrote above, "as trustee for" the future Czechoslovak Government.

"Take that to the Foreign Office to-morrow," I said, "and you will get your recognition."

"What does it mean?" asked Beneš, whose knowledge of French and German was superior to his knowledge of English.

"Don't ask, my dear fellow," I answered. "You will never understand. 'Trustee' is a mystical word. It is legal, moral, metaphysical, anything you like, but it will do your business for you."

"What is the French for it?" inquired Benes, incredulously.

"There is no French for it," I answered. "The dictionary may say that the French for 'trustee' is *fondé de pouvoirs*,

délégué, or *homme de confiance.* But 'trustee' means much more than that. It means that you will be recognized as responsible for the faithful expression of the wishes of the Czechoslovak people, if and when they wish to form an independent State and government of their own, but that they will be entitled to get rid of you if they do not want you."

Still puzzled and only half-convinced, Beneš returned next day to the Foreign Office, and came in glad haste to see me again in the afternoon.

"They have agreed to recognize us," he exclaimed. "They made not the slightest difficulty. They swallowed the word 'trustee' like cream, but I still don't know what it means."

"Never mind about that," I answered. "You must understand that we are a mystical people with a number of 'blessed words' in our vocabulary. Those words calm our moral scruples and flatter our sense of fairness. These are things which Continental peoples and governments have never been able to understand and probably never will. That is why they are always likely to be wrong about British policy. But if you cable Masaryk that Great Britain is ready to recognize him and you and Štefanik as 'trustees' for the future Czechoslovak Government, you will see that the Americans will accept our formula, because they are still Puritan enough to know what it means."

PASHITCH AND YUGOSLAVIA

Thus the provisional Czechoslovak Government was officially recognized on August 9th by Great Britain; and Masaryk presently secured the recognition of the United States Government and, with its approval, launched the Czechoslovak National Declaration of Independence on October 18th. Meanwhile, the granting of official status as an Ally to the Provisional Czechoslovak Government in Europe, and the recognition of the Czechoslovak Legion as an Allied army, made it urgent that similar recognition should be claimed and secured by the Serbian Government and the Yugoslav Committee jointly on behalf of all Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

It was to be expected that the Italian Government would be "sticky" in this respect; but M. Pashitch and the Serbian Government turned out to be just as unwilling to move in the desired direction. The reasons for their recalcitrance lay partly in the inveterate Serbian tendency to treat purely Balkan questions as of far greater importance than the question of Yugoslav National unity, partly in the unavowed but very real desire of M. Pashitch and the Serbian militarists to annex the Southern Slav provinces of Austria-Hungary, with the intention of "Serbifying" them instead of uniting Serbia with them on a footing of equality, and partly in the determination of M. Pashitch himself to retain office at all costs. Of the 124 members of the Serbian Chamber who escaped from Serbia when the country was overrun by the enemy in 1915, 60 were members of the Opposition. These declined to support any administration under Pashitch who thus remained without the support of a legal quorum.

During 1917 and the greater part of 1918 intrigues and counter-intrigues tended to discredit the Serbo-Yugoslav cause; and King Nicholas of Montenegro fanned the flames of discord. At last, things reached such a pass that it became necessary frankly to warn the Serbian Government that Allied recognition could only be granted on the lines of the Declaration of Corfu. Therefore Seton-Watson wrote, with the approval of Crewe House, a vigorous article in the *New Europe* of August 22, 1918. It stated that the Yugoslav Committee and the Serbian Government must act as equal factors, and concluded that "Any Serbian statesman who should fail to perceive this truth would deserve to be regarded, not merely as an obstacle to the cause of Allied unity but as a traitor to the best interests of his race. In Serbia as elsewhere, our sympathy and support must be given, not to the old Oriental tendencies, now tottering to their fall, but to those new and democratic elements in whose hands the future of Yugoslavia lies."

This article made a stir in the Southern Slav world and seems not to have received the unqualified approval of M. Pashitch. Towards the beginning of October, 1918, he came

to London where, however, he declined to receive, in their corporate capacity or otherwise than as private individuals, the members of the Yugoslav Committee. Presently he let me know that he wished to see me; and as I wished to see him in order to tell him what I and my friends of the Serbian Society of Great Britain thought of his behaviour in declining to receive the Yugoslav Committee, as such, we met at Claridge's Hotel on October 8th.

A LIVELY CONVERSATION

M. Pashitch began by saying that he wished to remove certain misapprehensions into which I had been led by inaccurate information as to the policy of the Serbian Government. He had always wished to form a Coalition Cabinet in order that all parties might bear the responsibility for failures and share the credit for successes; but representatives of the other Serbian parties had failed to work with him.

I said that I was much less interested in these somewhat ancient details than in seeing Serbia adopt a policy that would help to place Serbo-Yugoslav unity on a firm basis and thus to contribute to a lasting peace settlement in Europe. The friends of Serbia in Great Britain had greatly regretted that the Serbian Government should not have taken action, in accordance with the Declaration of Corfu, to secure for the Austro-Hungarian Yugoslavs the same recognition from the Allies as had been granted to the Czechoslovaks.

M. Pashitch answered that the Serbian Government could not regard the Austro-Hungarian Yugoslavs as requiring any such special recognition. It had always been the idea of Serbia to liberate them from the Hapsburg yoke and Serbia alone was qualified to do so. The Yugoslav Committee had been created by him and was his creature. Therefore he could not regard it as a qualified representative of the Austro-Hungarian Southern Slavs. The Czechoslovak National Council had a mandate from its own people whereas the Yugoslav Committee had none.

I reminded M. Pashitch that he was mis-stating the facts

and suggested that it was imprudent on his part to mis-state them to me, who had, from the outset, been connected with the formation of the Yugoslav Committee in London and with the placing of its funds (furnished by the Yugoslavs of South America) at Lloyds Bank. The mandate of the Yugoslav Committee was exactly of the same nature as that of the Czechoslovak National Council. It had made declarations and undertaken activities in Allied countries, and its declarations and activities had been ratified by its own people in Austria-Hungary in the same way as those of the Czechoslovak National Council had been. Moreover, it was strange that he, M. Pashitch, should have negotiated and signed the Declaration of Corfu with the President of a Yugoslav Committee devoid of a mandate.

M. Pashitch answered, somewhat angrily, that the Declaration of Corfu had merely been issued by him in order to make an impression upon European public opinion. At that time (July, 1917) there had been some talk of constituting Serbia-Yugoslavia as a Federation; but this was impossible. The Yugoslav people were very mixed. There were, for instance, a large number of Serbs in Slavonia and Croatia, all of whom were determined to belong to Serbia and cared nothing for what the Croats might do. Serbia had a right to liberate these people — and, if the Croats and Slovenes wished to belong elsewhere, they might do as they liked.

I asked M. Pashitch not to forget that I, too, knew something about the Southern Slavs of Austria-Hungary who were deeply attached to their historical provinces and to whom the old Triune Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia represented a reality. These provinces desired unity with Serbia on a basis of complete religious and political equality; likewise the Slovenes and Croats of Carniola and Istria, not to mention the Croats, Southern Slav Mussulmans, and Serbs of Bosnia-Herzegovina. But, much as they desired unity, they were determined not to be Balkanized by any Serbian policy of conquest or annexation. I did not think that the Allied peoples or the people of the United States would sanction a mere policy of territorial acquisition on the part of Serbia.

This seemed to upset M. Pashitch who retorted that the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia had been created by Austria against Serbia at the time when the Hapsburg Military Frontier against the Turks was abolished.

I answered that his historical knowledge seemed to be as defective as his appreciation of Western public opinion. The Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia-Dalmatia, I reminded him, dated from the 12th century, and that of Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia from the end of the 15th, at latest, whereas the creation of the Military Frontier dated from the end of the 17th and its abolition from the 19th centuries.

Feeling, perhaps, that chronology was not his strong point, M. Pashitch said that Serbia intended to demand from the Allies recognition of her sole right to liberate the Austro-Hungarian Southern Slavs. When she had liberated them they might do what they liked, provided her rights were maintained.

I warned him that a Serbian Government, animated by such a spirit, would find difficulty in getting from the Allied governments and from the United States a mandate of the kind he suggested. I assured him that the proceedings of the Serbian authorities in Macedonia after the Balkan wars of 1912-13 were too well known for it to be likely that Allied opinion would tolerate the adoption of any similar methods towards the Southern Slavs of Austria-Hungary. The only proper course would be for the Serbian Government and the Southern Slav Committee jointly to ask the Allied governments to grant Allied and belligerent status to the Southern Slavs of Austria-Hungary and to declare jointly a desire to create a united and independent Southern Slav State on the basis of the Declaration of Corfu.

M. Pashitch said that he was willing to observe the Declaration of Corfu, but that the dominant policy must be his policy and that officials who did not obey his orders must be removed. He alone was entitled to determine what policy should be followed; and those whom he employed had to obey orders.

"Your Excellency speaks like a Sultan," I returned, "and

I warn you that the Allied peoples are in no mood to respect Sultans. They feel gratitude towards Serbia, and deep admiration for the gallantry of her armies; but they do not identify the cause of Serbia with any single person, nor do the personal positions or ambitions of any individuals weigh with them for a moment. And since your Excellency talks of dismissing officials, allow me to point out that the Serbian Government has done itself much harm at Washington by the dismissal of the Serbian Minister, M. Mihailovitch, on account of his Southern Slav sympathies; and that, should the Serbian Minister in London, M. Jovanovitch, who has won general respect in this country, be similarly dismissed for similar reasons, and be replaced by any official of doubtful antecedents, it would take long for the Serbian Legation to regain the standing which it has acquired under M. Jovanovitch."

"That is for me to decide," answered M. Pashitch. "I have given orders and my employees have to obey; and in order to show that Serbian policy cannot be affected by any one official I will remove Jovanovitch at once and ask the British Government to accept a more desirable nominee."

I told M. Pashitch that, though I was not in a position to say what the British Government would think of such a proceeding, I must warn him emphatically, in the name of the friends of Serbia in this country, to be very careful how he treated M. Jovanovitch.

M. Pashitch seemed taken aback. Before he could answer I told him that my time was short and I must go. I had come to tell him quite frankly what I and the other members of the Serbian Society of Great Britain felt about his policy so as to leave him no excuse for saying that he had not been fairly warned. Then I left him.

On returning to Crewe House I dictated a memorandum of this conversation and sent it to Mr. Balfour, whom M. Pashitch was to see next day. Mr. Balfour expressed approval of my frankness with the Serbian Prime Minister and used my memorandum as a brief for his own interview with M. Pashitch. In fact, M. Pashitch left the Foreign Office

under the impression that, if anything, my language had been milder than that of the British Foreign Secretary. I never saw, or wished to see, M. Pashitch again. As his subsequent conduct proved, the character of a petty Balkan Sultan in which I had seen him was his true character. His attitude at the beginning of October was the less excusable because the Italian Government had issued at Rome, on September 25th, an official statement recognizing as desirable the union of the Yugoslav peoples with Serbia in a Free State. On the same day in London Senator Marconi, speaking on behalf of the Italian Government at a banquet given by Lord Northcliffe in honour of an Italian "Flag Day," had declared that while Italy could not assent to the creation of a Yugoslav State under the Hapsburgs, she viewed the union of the Yugoslavs with Serbia in a Southern Slav Free State as an essential Allied war aim.

"FOOLERY"

That Italian Flag Day had a history of its own. We organized it at Crewe House, the money collected in the streets and elsewhere being devoted to the Italian Red Cross. We had wished it to be held on September 20th, the Italian National Festival that celebrates the Italian entry into Rome on September 20, 1870. But the Italian Ambassador, the Marquis Imperiali, who had strong Clerical leanings, was terrified lest the organization of the Flag Day on September 20th in London get him into trouble with some of his "Black" friends; and, in order to avoid personal responsibility, he took a holiday for a while. The majority of Italians were, however, anxious that the Italian flag should fly on the Victoria Tower at Westminster, alongside of the Union Jack, on September 20th. At Crewe House we shared this wish and urged the Foreign Office to grant it. Before leaving London, the Marquis Imperiali also advised the subordinates whom he had left in charge to have the flag flown on September 20th, though he thought it more prudent not to support the request in person. A struggle of influences took place at the Foreign

Office, a number of Catholics protesting that to fly the flag on September 20th would so seriously wound Roman Catholic feelings that Cardinal Bourne, the Archbishop of Westminster, would find himself unable to officiate at the Requiem Mass for the Italian dead which was to be celebrated in Westminster Cathedral on September 25th. Mr. Balfour listened for more than an hour to the advocates of the Roman Catholic and of the British Liberal view. Presently he said, not without a "Pygmalion" profanity rare in a man of his measured utterances: "Gentlemen, this is all —— foolery. The flag will fly on the 20th." Thus, for the first time, the flag of Italy waved from Victoria Tower on September 20, 1918.

ITALIAN APPREHENSIONS

Senator Marconi's speech or, rather, official statement, at Lord Northcliffe's banquet on September 25th was, and is, a significant document in another respect than in its relation to Italy and Yugoslavia. Much of it was an indirect plea that strong American reinforcements should be sent to the Italian front during the autumn and winter in order to ease the burden of the Italian Army in holding a long flank peculiarly susceptible to enemy attack. Representations to this effect had already been made to Lord Northcliffe by an Italian deputation whose speeches I had translated, my translation being checked by an Italian who spoke English. Northcliffe had promised to use whatever influence he might possess with the American authorities to have the Italian request taken into consideration, but he had warned the deputation that, unless the policy of Italy were brought into harmony with the principles laid down by President Wilson, it might be difficult to get even an American division sent to Italy. Thereupon some members of the deputation hastened to the Italian Embassy and caused a report to be sent by telegraph to the Italian Government that Lord Northcliffe was hostile to Italy and had declared that he would use his influence to prevent a single American soldier from being sent to the Italian front. They did not know that their report would be

at once communicated to the British Embassy in Rome — with an official Italian complaint of Northcliffe's "attitude" — and that the British Ambassador's despatch upon it would be in our hands within forty-eight hours. Thus we were able to detect, and to correct, their curious performance. Nevertheless, Senator Marconi begged Northcliffe on behalf of the Italian Government, to urge the American authorities to send 500,000 troops to Italy at once; and Northcliffe supported the request on the understanding that Italian policy would once more be brought into harmony with the resolutions of the Rome Congress. But, within a month, events were to show how completely the Italians had misjudged their own military position.

PROPAGANDA FOR PEACE

The sweeping successes of the Allied armies on the Western front in August and September, the successful Franco-Serbian advance in the Balkans from September 15th onwards, General Allenby's victories over the Turks in Palestine, and the breaking of the Hindenburg Line by the British and Americans on September 29th, heralded so clearly the approaching end of the war that it became urgent publicly to proclaim the Allied peace terms. On August 14th, Lord Northcliffe had convened a second Inter-Allied Propaganda Conference at Crewe House to consider the work already done and to agree upon policies for the immediate future. It was a very different affair from our first Conference at the end of February and the beginning of March. The success that had attended our efforts during the spring and summer had made Crewe House popular in the official world, and Allied governments and British departments of State were eager to help in its work. Some forty delegates attended from France, Italy, the United States, and Great Britain; and in three days much useful work was done, especially in regard to the Italo-Yugoslav question. Indeed, the declaration in favour of Yugoslav and Serbian unity, issued by the Italian Government on September 25th, was a transcript of a resolution unanimously adopted by the Policy Committee of our Propaganda Conference. It was agreed

also that, henceforth, representatives of the National Councils of the subject Hapsburg races should be included in our technical propaganda committees. But the most important result of the Conference lay in its sequel. After the closing sitting, an important member of the British General Staff suggested to me, on behalf of the War Office, that Crewe House should at once take in hand the drafting of a propaganda peace policy with the assistance of all Departments of State. He said:

"The way you fellows have run this Conference shows that you may be able to do what nobody else can do. Luckily, you are not a Department of State and therefore nobody is jealous of you. Also you have succeeded, and therefore everybody will be glad to work with you. What is wanted is an Inter-Departmental Committee, formed of delegates important enough to be able to decide matters for their several departments, to draft the broad lines of a peace programme so that it can be distributed throughout the world with the approval of the War Cabinet. If you will take on the job, we will help you."

After some consideration we "took on the job." The Inter-Departmental Committee was formed, the War Cabinet, the Admiralty, the War Office, the Foreign Office, the Treasury, the Air Ministry, the Colonial Office, the India Office, the Ministry of Information, the National War Aims Committee, and the Press Bureau each appointing a representative of high rank; and a small Crewe House sub-committee was instructed to prepare a draft peace programme. Among the materials on which it worked was the "Programme for Peace" article which I had contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* in April, 1916; but Chalmers Mitchell, Seton-Watson, Hamilton Fyfe, C. J. Phillips, and Guest were also, and especially, the responsible authors of the final draft which the Inter-Departmental Committee adopted on October 9th, and ratified, with certain emendations, on October 19th.

As "indisputable conditions" of peace this programme provided for the complete restoration and indemnification of Belgium, independently of other Allied claims for reparation;

and for the freeing of French territory, the reconstruction of the invaded Provinces, and compensation for all civilian losses and injuries. It stipulated also the restoration to France of Alsace-Lorraine, not as a territorial acquisition or part of a war indemnity, but as reparation for the wrong done in 1871, when the inhabitants of the two Provinces, whose ancestors had voluntarily chosen French allegiance in 1790, were incorporated in Germany against their will.

In regard to Italy, the programme foreshadowed the readjustment of her frontiers as nearly as possible along the lines of nationality; and it assured to all the peoples of Austria-Hungary a place amongst the free nations of the world and their right to enter into union with their kindred beyond the present boundaries of Austria-Hungary.

Upon the question of Russia, the programme demanded the evacuation of Russian territory by enemy forces, the annulment of all treaties, contracts, or agreements made with subjects, agents, or representatives of Enemy Powers since the revolution and affecting territory or interests formerly Russian, and the coöperation of the Associated Powers in securing conditions under which the various nationalities of the former Empire of Russia should be able to determine their own form of government. In particular, it provided for the establishment of an independent Polish State with access to the sea, which State should include the territories inhabited by predominantly Polish populations; and for the indemnification of Poland by the Powers responsible for the havoc wrought.

In regard to the Eastern Question, the programme proposed the abrogation of the Treaty of Bucharest of 1913, the evacuation and restoration of Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro, and the removal, so far as practicable, of Turkish dominion over non-Turkish peoples.

As reparation for the submarine warfare waged by Germany and Austria-Hungary, the programme stipulated that those Powers should be held liable to replace the merchant tonnage, belonging to the Allied, Associated, and Neutral nations, illegally damaged or destroyed; while it insisted upon

the appointment of a tribunal before which individuals of any of the belligerents accused of offences against the laws of war or of humanity should be brought for impartial justice. It contained also a passage to the effect that the former Colonial possessions of Germany had been lost by her in consequence of her illegal aggression against Belgium.

Among the negotiable conditions of Peace the programme enumerated:

(1) The adjustment of claims for damage necessarily arising from the operations of war, and not included amongst the indisputable conditions.

(2) The establishment, constitution, and conditions of membership of a League of Free Nations for the purpose of preventing future wars and improving international relations.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE AND PEACE

After the adoption of this programme by the Inter-Departmental Committee on October 9th, Lord Northcliffe wished it to be submitted at once to the Prime Minister. Therefore he took Chalmers Mitchell and me with it to No. 10 Downing Street, where he left us with Mr. Lloyd George. After glancing through the programme, Mr. Lloyd George said abruptly:

"I can't have this. It invades the sphere of government. Here you are laying down principles and conditions which only the Allied Governments are competent to decide."

"It is not the first time we have invaded the sphere of government — with the sanction of the Government," I replied. "Besides, this programme is not the fruit of our unaided imaginations. It represents the work of a Committee representing nine Departments of State, and it has their unanimous approval."

"I care nothing about that," returned Mr. Lloyd George. "The Departments of State have no business to interfere with these matters, which must be reserved to the Allied Governments."

"The Inter-Departmental Committee," I replied, "was ap-

pointed at the suggestion of the War Office with the approval of the War Cabinet which was represented on it. The policy embodied in this programme is not to be announced as the official policy of the British Government but as the policy of the Enemy Propaganda Department. It is propaganda; but just as we have always sought in advance the sanction of the Government for our propaganda policies, so we now seek your sanction and that of the War Cabinet for this policy. Otherwise, we fear that an armistice may be made with the Germans upon an interpretation of President Wilson's Fourteen Points that would mislead them as to British policy."

"Well, I cannot sanction it. I cannot allow you to bind the hands of the Government by announcing things of this sort."

"And, unfortunately, we cannot take 'no' for an answer," I returned. "What is your objection to a peace policy as outlined here?"

"I cannot be bound by principles and programmes such as those you lay down," answered the Prime Minister. "I am a lawyer. I know that possession is nine-tenths of the law. When the Peace Conference meets, we shall go there in a very strong position — with the German colonies, or most of them, in our hands; the German Fleet in our grip, or at the bottom of the sea; the German mercantile marine handed over to us to make good our losses — and we are not going to give away these advantages in advance. What we do with them may be a matter for negotiation; but meanwhile we shall hold them."

"That is not the spirit in which the Allies have fought the war," I objected, "and we ought not, in my opinion, to depart from it in the peace."

Chalmers Mitchell, whose face had shown blank surprise at Mr. Lloyd George's attitude, said that he agreed with me entirely. He appealed to Mr. Lloyd George, in the name of "England's honour" to uphold Allied ideals.

"Anyhow, I can't have this," declared the Prime Minister testily, as he threw the programme on to the table.

"If you can't have it and will not examine it, will you appoint someone who can examine it?" I asked.

"You can take it to Balfour, if you like."

"If Mr. Balfour accepts it, will that mean that the British Government accepts it?"

"Oh! If Balfour has no objection to it we will see what can be done, but I can't take it like this."

As Chalmers Mitchell and I left Downing Street, he said: "It has been suggested to me that I should stand as a Liberal Candidate at the next General Election, and I had some thought of doing so. But I will never stand as a candidate for any party that is obliged to support a man who talks as he has talked."

I, too, felt that the gulf between my view of the war and of the peace and the view of the peace which Mr. Lloyd George had expressed was too wide and deep to be bridged.

Fortunately, Mr. Balfour consented to examine the Propaganda Peace Programme on behalf of the Government, and asked Chalmers Mitchell, Phillips and me to discuss it with him at the Foreign Office. We went through it point by point and were glad to find Mr. Balfour in complete agreement with it, except that he objected to its original wording about the German Colonies. He suggested, as an amendment, the wording: "The former Colonial possessions of Germany, lost by her in consequence of her illegal aggression against Belgium, shall in no case be returned to Germany." With this change, the War Cabinet sanctioned the use of the programme as propaganda; and after a final meeting of the Inter-Departmental Committee had ratified Mr. Balfour's amendment on October 19th, Northcliffe outlined the programme in a speech to American officers in London on October 22nd. On November 4th, a week before the Armistice, he published its full text, with explanatory comment, in the form of an article in *The Times* which was reproduced by the leading German newspapers and widely discussed throughout Germany. It certainly helped to hasten the collapse of German resistance. In fact, it was the crowning achievement of Crewe House Propaganda.

PROPAGANDA AFTER PEACE

Meanwhile, the question had arisen whether our propaganda should cease with the cessation of hostilities or whether it should be transformed into a propaganda of explanation and reconciliation between Allied and enemy peoples. Before a decision could be taken, I heard of an incident which convinced me that an effort to educate the German people to some comprehension of the Allied standpoint in the war might be as necessary and as effective as our war propaganda had been. In despair, the Austrian Government had, on October 17th, proclaimed a federation of the German Austrians, Czechs, Ukrainians, and Yugoslavs. On October 18th, the provisional Czechoslovak Government in Paris was formally recognized by all the Allies. On October 24th the British divisions under Lord Cavan had begun an offensive against the Austrians — a move about which the Italian Government were so nervous that they announced it as an isolated British undertaking. But after the initial British success, the Italian General Staff promptly ordered a general offensive which made rapid progress and ended in the complete collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Army at Vittorio Veneto on October 29th. On October 24th, the Hungarian Government had fallen; and, on the following day, Count Károlyi had formed a Hungarian National Council. On October 27th, the Czechs proclaimed their freedom and independence at Prague, and Austria-Hungary sued for peace. Two days later, Yugoslav independence was proclaimed.

On October 30th, Doctor Kramarzh, the leader of the Young Czech Party who had been imprisoned and condemned to death in Austria, met Doctor Beneš at Geneva. Notwithstanding their equal delight at the liberation of their country, the two men found great difficulty in understanding each other. Since 1915 Beneš had lived and worked in Allied countries and had become thoroughly imbued with the Allied spirit, whereas Kramarzh had, perforce, remained in Austria and had received, in spite of himself, many of his impressions of the war through German and Austrian channels. As they

talked, Beneš gradually realized the wide gap between the Allied and the Central European views of the war. On returning to Paris he told me of his experience; and I felt that, if the divergence between two Czech patriots were so great, the divergence between the Allied and the German peoples must be still greater — so great, indeed, as to preclude all understanding between them unless and until a common vocabulary, or a common set of ideas, could be formed.

I discussed this impression with Northcliffe, who was then in Paris, and laid before him a scheme for the transformation of Crewe House propaganda into a means of enabling the German people gradually to see why Germany had lost the war, and, to understand the force of the moral ideas which had ranged practically the whole civilized world in arms against her. Since it was clear that the Western districts of Germany, at least up to the Rhine, must remain for some time in Allied occupation, I proposed that one or two of us who were journalists should go, as journalists, to the editors of the principal German newspapers in the West — I had in mind especially the *Kölnische Zeitung,* the Catholic *Kölnische Volkszeitung,* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung* — and explain to them that the most interesting thing for the German people would be to know the true causes of its defeat in order that some common denominator between the German and the Allied standpoints might gradually be evolved. I did not think that Allied writers should attempt to give these explanations to German readers, but that a series of articles, of which the publication would extend over many months, should be written by well-known Germans who had either lived outside Germany during the war, or who knew the facts well enough to write intelligibly upon them for Germans in good German. As an inducement to publish these articles I wished to offer the German newspapers which might undertake to print them, as much of *The Times* news service *gratis* as they might care to take. Commercially, this offer would have been very valuable to them. German editors, I believed, would have been shrewd enough to perceive its advantages, especially since

the German articles we proposed to supply would have been frankly and fairly written.

Northcliffe jumped at the plan and insisted on discussing it at once with the head of the French military propaganda, Commandant Chaix, who entered heartily into the idea and promised to place at our disposal the resources of his organization. Northcliffe was the more eager to begin because Mr. Lloyd George had asked him to transfer the principal members of the Crewe House staff to Paris, and to make himself responsible for the British publicity arrangements at the Peace Conference. Lloyd George, Northcliffe told me, had urged him to take a house near Lloyd George's own headquarters, so that the Crewe House Staff might be in constant touch with the Prime Minister and his secretariate.

Therefore we retained an apartment which Lord Onslow, our representative in Paris, had already secured for Crewe House and began to look about for Northcliffe's own quarters. This was on November 4th. Next day, Northcliffe returned to London on business, leaving me in Paris to complete the arrangements. But when he returned, on November 12th, the day after the Armistice, the situation had altered. Mr. Lloyd George had changed his mind and had decided to put his friend, Sir George (afterwards Lord) Riddell, in charge of British publicity arrangements. A rumour was presently circulated that Northcliffe and Lloyd George had quarrelled about Northcliffe's status at the Peace Conference, Northcliffe — so ran the story — having wished to be one of the British delegates and Lloyd George having refused his request. What truth, if any, there was in this story, I never discovered. I have always disbelieved it, both because Northcliffe never gave me any hint that he cherished such an ambition, and because he knew he was far too unwell to undertake work so exacting as that of a delegate to the Peace Conference would have been. Throughout 1918 he had suffered acutely from the growth in his throat which was to compel him — in June, 1919,— to undergo a serious operation. For this reason he had been unable to take a very active part in our work at Crewe House, though he had gallantly signed

the documents prepared for him and had allowed us to use and abuse of his name and influence. On November 12th, when I called upon him in Paris, I found him in bed almost gasping for breath and unable to speak above a whisper. He showed me a letter he had just written to Mr. Lloyd George resigning the Directorship of Propaganda in Enemy Countries on the ground that the nature of the Armistice necessitated the termination of propaganda against the enemy.

I regretted this decision but could not change it. Northcliffe sought to reassure me by saying that the work could be carried on through *The Times* and the *Daily Mail,* with the assistance of some of the Crewe House staff; and he asked me to stay in Paris throughout the Peace Conference in order to supervise it. As for himself, he felt too ill for serious work and had been ordered by his doctors to spend the winter in the South of France.

Thus our propaganda came to an end at a moment when I thought, and still think, it might have been constructively useful. With it disappeared also the chance of carrying out the plan for the enlightenment of the German people. Though I continued to work privately in the sense of our Crewe House Peace programme, with the help of Seton-Watson and Chalmers Mitchell, who presently joined me in Paris, we no longer disposed of the machinery needful for continuous and effective effort.

ARMISTICE DAY

As soon as Colonel House, President Wilson's confidential adviser and delegate in Europe, heard that our propaganda had come to an end, he invited me to assist him in an honorary capacity as adviser on Central and Southern European questions. This invitation I gladly accepted. To Colonel House I was, and am, warmly attached, and I looked forward to the prospect of collaboration with him. I was in his house at 11 A.M. on the morning of November 11, 1918, when a submarine, moored in the Seine opposite the Chamber of Deputies, began to fire salutes in celebration of the Armistice. With an American officer I walked across the Place de la Con-

corde where crowds were gathering and improvised celebrations were beginning. At first, Paris seemed stunned, as though unable to realize that the war was over. Not until the late afternoon and evening were there noisy manifestations of enthusiasm. The exact terms of the Armistice were not yet known and, in many quarters, a feeling of regret that the Allies should not have marched through to Berlin tempered satisfaction at the actual end of bloodshed.

In some respects this regret was justified. Many of the difficulties that afterwards arose between the Allies and Germany would not have arisen had the German people been given ocular proof of their defeat. The belief that the downfall of Germany was due solely to mutinies in the army, fostered by enemy intrigues, would not have been implanted so firmly in German minds. Why the Allies concluded the Armistice when and where they did is a question that has been much discussed but never exhaustively answered. President Wilson's exchange of messages with the Germans was undoubtedly a decisive, but not the sole element. In France it was long thought that Allied agreement upon the Armistice terms to be proposed to Germany was the result of American dictation; and though this notion was presently corrected, to some extent, by an exchange of letters between Colonel House and Lieutenant Paul Mantoux, the official interpreter at the meetings of the Supreme Council of the Allies, it still persists in many quarters.

I cannot claim to know all the details of the proceedings on November 4th, when the Allies finally adopted the Armistice terms; but I have verified my impressions by comparing notes with several of the men who were present. All agree that, when the military terms had been settled, Colonel House, in the name of President Wilson, asked Marshal Foch, the Allied Commander-in-Chief, whether, from the purely military standpoint and putting aside all political considerations whatsoever, he thought the terms sufficient to secure a complete Allied victory; or whether, as a soldier, he would prefer the Germans to reject them.

Marshal Foch answered, "The object of war is victory, not

victory at any precise time or place. These terms give us victory. They are enough."

Later on, when the naval terms were being reviewed, the British representative, Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss (now Lord Wester-Wemyss) pressed for the inclusion of another German warship in the list of naval units to be surrendered. Marshal Foch objected strongly, saying that the list as it stood was ample.

"You are not going to risk a German rejection of the Armistice for the sake of another old cruiser, are you?" he asked sharply.

This incident seems to show that Marshal Foch sincerely desired the war to end. I have repeatedly discussed this point with him and am under the impression that, on November 4th, he thought it might be necessary to continue the war for some months before Berlin could be occupied, and that, in view of the Armistice terms, there would be no adequate justification for the losses that would be incurred. Had he then known how rapid had been the process of demoralization in the German Army and had he fully realized the importance of the collapse of Austria-Hungary or the fact that the Czech Declaration of Independence would enable the Allies to threaten Dresden and Berlin from Bohemia, he might not have placed so high an estimate upon German powers of resistance.

In some French military minds, though not necessarily in the mind of Foch, a further consideration undoubtedly weighed in favour of the immediate conclusion of an Armistice. Both the French and British armies had suffered so heavily that they were becoming numerically inferior to the American Army, of which the strength was growing from day to day. Some French soldiers feared that, if war were prolonged until the spring of 1919, the United States might demand that the Supreme Command of the Allied and Associated armies should pass to General Pershing, and that the preponderating influence thus acquired by America in the Councils of Europe would have led to the conclusion of an "American peace" unsuited to European conditions. Whether this argument carried weight with Marshal Foch I am unable to

say; but I know that it was used in exalted French military circles at the time.

Be these things as they may, the Armistice was concluded on November 11th amid general rejoicing — rejoicing in which I felt disinclined to share because I was obsessed by the feeling that the peace negotiations might ruin the Allied victory if they were conducted in the spirit which Mr. Lloyd George had displayed at Downing Street in October. For the first time since August 4, 1914, I felt despondent — a despondency that grew when I learned that the Peace Conference could not meet until the middle of January. I feared that, in the interval, much of the idealism which had sustained the Allied peoples during the war might evaporate and give place to national selfishness — a fear which the event was abundantly to justify.

THE EMPRESS EUGÉNIE AND CLEMENCEAU

On November 13th, two days after the Armistice, I returned to London. Crewe House was almost deserted; but, in conversation with some of my colleagues there, the idea arose that it would now be interesting for me to accept an invitation — which I had been obliged to decline in the summer — to visit the Empress Eugénie at Farnborough. The invitation had been given through the well-known British composer, Dr. Ethel Smyth, an old friend of the Empress. It appeared that a lady-in-waiting had read to the Empress the French edition of my book, "The Hapsburg Monarchy," and that the Empress had wished to examine me upon it and to scold me for expressing some views of which she did not approve. But, in July, there had been no time for anything beyond urgent work, and I had asked permission to postpone the visit till a more convenient season. On November 14th, however, I let Dr. Ethel Smyth know that, if the Empress still wished to see me, I should be glad to go to Farnborough on the following Sunday. Within a few hours she replied that the Empress would expect her and me to luncheon on Sunday, November 17th.

We reached Farnborough about midday. Though I had heard much of the Empress's vitality, notwithstanding her ninety-two years, I was not prepared for the vigour of her conversation, the strength of her temperament, or the intensity of her interest in things past and present. Placing me by her side at luncheon she plunged at once into a discussion of Austria, the Emperor Francis Joseph, and of European history from 1850 to 1871. She was a severe examiner. She gave no quarter and seemed to expect none. Her criticsim of my "mistaken" notions was merciless, and I felt under no obligation, save that of courtesy towards an aged dame, to accept it meekly. After luncheon, the discussion was resumed in her drawing room where it lasted without intermission until 5 P.M., when I had to return to London. By that time I was exhausted; but the Empress seemed to feel no fatigue and bade me good-bye with the same bright mien as that with which she had welcomed me. Her views on Austria and on past history are now of little interest, though I felt admiration for her spirited defence of the letter she wrote to her husband, Napoleon III, in 1859 urging him to make peace with the Emperor Francis Joseph without delay after the Franco-Italian victories at Magenta and Solferino because she had heard that the Prussians were massing troops on the Rhine. She appeared to care little for the effects of that hasty peace upon Franco-Italian relations, nor did she appear to regret the Clerical policy of France that led to the Franco-Italian fight at Mentana in 1867. In another respect, her standpoint was singular. She said:

"The Germans blundered when they took Alsace and Lorraine. I wrote to the old Emperor William afterwards to say what a blunder he had made; and we had quite a correspondence about it. I wrote also to the King of Wurtemberg, who agreed with me. He was a big man, much too big for his little State. The Emperor and I always called him "*un géant dans un entresol.*"

The idea that the Empress Eugénie should have continued to correspond, in friendly or semi-friendly fashion, with German sovereigns after the disasters of 1870-71, startled me.

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After all, I thought, monarchs of that kind can never have looked upon lands and peoples otherwise than as pawns in their dynastic game.

But the Empress gave me little time for reflection. I had hardly answered one of her questions about Austria when she said:

"You were in Paris on Armistice Day. It must have been wonderful. Tell me all about it. What were the people like? I should have loved to be there."

When I had described what I had seen she exclaimed:

"Ah! that Clemenceau! Were he my worst enemy, I would love him, I could even kiss him, for the good he has done to France."

"May I give M. Clemenceau that message, Madame?" I enquired.

"No," she returned sharply, "no message. I died in 1870."

"But, Madame, 1870 is now dead. Your Majesty can live again."

"No, no! I am quite dead. But Clemenceau blundered. He should have attended the *Te Deum* in Notre Dame. He would have united France. He would have taught a great lesson of moderation and unity. He might have become *Consul!*"

The Empress pronounced the word "Consul" in a tone of rapture, raising her hand until it pointed to the ceiling.

"She is true to type," I thought; but I said aloud, "I fancy that M. Clemenceau cherishes no such ambitions."

"No matter. He can make good his mistake. Presently he will go to Strasburg. He must visit the Cathedral there. He may still unite France and give a lesson of unity and moderation."

"May I give M. Clemenceau this advice from your Majesty?"

"No! I tell you I died in 1870."

Then, suddenly, the Empress asked:

"Now, what are you going to do for my poor country?"

"Why, madame, every Englishman is ready to do all in his power, and more, for France."

"I do not mean France. I am speaking of Spain."

So taken aback was I at this revelation of her Spanish patriotism that I needed to think of her as the Countess Montijo rather than as the Empress Eugénie before I could collect my wits. By this time she had become alternately dithyrambic about Spain and ferocious in her denunciations of the Spanish Government, which would not build roads upon her vast Spanish properties although they extended over nearly 800,000 acres. Somewhat maliciously I suggested that, with possessions so vast, it might have been possible for her to build the roads herself; but she retorted with a yet more vehement denunciation of Spanish methods and insisted that road building was the business of the Government, not that of a private owner.

On my way back to London I thought I had discovered the secret of the fall of the Second Empire. If, in her ninety-third year, the Empress Eugénie was still a tempest incarnate, she must have been a hurricane in the 'sixties and 'seventies; and, for the first time, I felt a sneaking sympathy for Napoleon III.

A fortnight later, on Sunday, December 1st, the French Prime Minister, M. Clemenceau, with Marshal Foch, came to London to discuss the preliminaries to the Peace Conference. I had an important message for M. Clemenceau and called that evening at the French Embassy to deliver it. I found him looking tired. The crossing had been rough and he had been bruised by the lurching of the vessel. Therefore I told him that I would not keep him long.

"Oh!" he answered, after he had received the message, "don't go away. I have leisure now. The poor old Tiger has lost his teeth and his claws. He is all smiles" — and he smiled with the air of a man whose supreme work had been well done.

"In any case, Monsieur le Président," I continued, "I will not keep you as long as an illustrious lady kept me a fortnight ago. She talked, or kept me talking, for five hours by the clock and left me worn out while she, with her ninety-three summers, seemed as fresh as a maiden."

"Ah! you frequent illustrious ladies of such tender age. I cannot say that I admire your taste. What's her name?"

"Eugénie," I answered.

"What! That old woman is still alive?"

"Yes; and she even said that if Clemenceau were her worst enemy she would love him and kiss him for the good he has done to France."

"Excellent sentiments!"

"But when I asked whether I might tell you that, she forbade it, saying that she died in 1870."

"That's true. She is quite dead."

"Then, she added that Clemenceau had made a blunder."

"Ah! What blunder, I should like to know?" exclaimed Clemenceau sharply.

"He ought to have attended the *Te Deum* in Notre Dame. He would have united France and would have taught a great lesson of unity and moderation. He might even have become *Consul!*"

"Clemenceau has no such ambition."

"That is what I told her, Monsieur le Président. 'But,' she continued, 'Clemenceau can retrieve his mistake when he goes to Strasburg. He must visit the Cathedral there. He can still unite France and give a great lesson of unity and moderation.'"

"She'll be wrong again, the old woman. Clemenceau won't go to the Cathedral. She did well to die."

"I am not giving advice, Monsieur le Président. I repeat only what I heard."

On the next Sunday, December 8th, M. Clemenceau entered Strasburg amid scenes of indescribable rejoicing. He went to the Cathedral and listened to an allocution from the Canon. On his return to Paris I heard him speak in the Chamber on his Strasburg visit. One passage of his speech ran:

"The days at Strasburg are graven in my heart. Among the crowd I saw an old nun who, with eyes downcast under her coif, softly sang the Marseillaise. Ah! gentlemen, that was a great lesson in unity and moderation."

I have since searched the French *Journal Officiel* for this

passage in Clemenceau's speech, but it seems to have been suppressed in revision. In any case, I heard it. Whether it was ever repeated to the Empress Eugénie I do not know. She certainly never knew that Clemenceau had been told what she said. Possibly Clemenceau himself thought no more of her. But the facts are as I have related them.

CHAPTER XVII

THE PEACE CONFERENCE. I

1919

A FULL history of the Paris Peace Conference can never be written. Even when all documents and diaries have been published, and all contemporary records collated, there will remain gaps that nobody can fill. Especially will it be impossible to reproduce the atmosphere of Paris during the first six months of 1919; and, without knowledge of the atmosphere, many of the words and deeds of the leading actors in that historic tragi-comedy must ever be incomprehensible. I do not propose to give yet another incomplete and partial account of the Conference, but merely to set down, as faithfully as memory permits and with the aid of memoranda and articles written from day to day, my impressions of the Conference as I watched it from the beginning down to the presentation of the Peace Terms to the German delegates.

From the middle of January to the 19th of May, 1919, I wrote daily to Lord Northcliffe, who was ill in the South of France, a confidential memorandum upon the work of the Conference. Of nearly all these memoranda I have copies. During the same period I was in general charge of the correspondence of *The Times*, though the main burden of the work was borne by Mr. George Adam, then its regular Paris correspondent, and his assistants. From January 16th onwards I wrote also — at Lord Northcliffe's urgent request — a leading article every day for the Paris edition of the *Daily Mail*. Communications between London and Paris were so difficult, and so thick was the mist that hid the inner workings of the Conference from the outside world that, on receipt of my first memorandum, Lord Northcliffe concluded that neither *The Times* nor any journal not published in Paris could comment

upon the Conference promptly and pertinently; and, in view of the part to be played in it by the British and American delegations, he thought it indispensable that comment upon it in English should be both pertinent and prompt. He believed that, for the time being, the Paris *Daily Mail* was "the most important newspaper in the world," because the English-speaking delegates would read it "with their morning coffee."

MASARYK AS PRESIDENT

Though the Conference was not to open officially until the middle of January, Northcliffe had been eager for our organization to be working in Paris before the end of December; and Colonel House wished me also to be in Paris as early as possible. Therefore, after greeting Masaryk in London on his arrival from New York as President-Designate of the new Czechslovak Republic, I went on December 6th to make the necessary arrangements in Paris, where Seton-Watson and Chalmers Mitchell presently joined me for a time. It was a grief to us that C. J. Phillips, who had done splendid work as the Foreign Office representative at Crewe House, should not have been included in the *personnel* of the British delegation to the Peace Conference. With the modesty characteristic of many men of outstanding ability, he was anxious to resume his regular duties at the Board of Education and to let his war work end with the war. His last achievement had been to procure, at a moment's notice, a Guard of Honour for the reception at Euston of Masaryk — a detail which the Foreign Office overlooked, though the United States Government had given Masaryk a Guard of Honour on his departure from New York. I shall not readily forget the mingled formality and informality of Masaryk's arrival. The General Commanding the London district and a representative of the Foreign Office were present to receive him, but neither of them knew him even by sight. Seton-Watson, I, and other friends were standing in the crowd at one end of the platform when the General in question came towards me, looked me up and down, and asked, in his best military voice:

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"Are you anybody in particular?"

"No," I answered. "I am foreign editor of *The Times* in general."

"Oh!" he exclaimed, and turned away.

Presently he came back and asked whether I had ever seen the President; and when I admitted that I had seen him I was requested to point him out to the authorities.

There was no need to point him out. As the train drew up, the same dear old Masaryk came out of it in a long ulster coat and a soft felt hat. He rushed towards me like the old friend that he was and is. Then the authorities took charge of him, made him review the Coldstream Company of Honour, of which the band, in its ignorance of the Czechoslovak National Anthem, was playing "See the Conquering Hero Comes," and deposited him in a War Office Staff car which had only two seats. They expected Masaryk to drive off in State, but he would not hear of it. He dragged me into the car after him and sat me on his knee while Osusky, now Czechoslovak Minister in Paris, took Seton-Watson on his knee. Thus, to the blank amazement of the authorities, Masaryk made his official entry into London. We left on the platform the General Commanding the London District still wondering whether we might be "anybody in particular," and musing doubtfully over the strange behaviour of the wild men from Central Europe.

ORLANDO AGAIN

When I reached Paris a message was brought to me by an Italian friend that Orlando, the Italian Prime Minister, wished to see me. I replied that I could not see him because he had broken faith with me by not adhering to the policy of the Rome Congress, despite his official pledge to me in June. He answered that he hoped I would suspend judgment until he should have explained the circumstances, and asked me again to call upon him. I went; and, in a long conversation, dealt faithfully with him. He admitted that he had broken his pledge but urged that the difficulties had been such as to make it impossible for him to risk a Cabinet crisis in Italy by get-

ting rid of Sonnino during the summer. He wanted, however, to put things again on to a sound footing in view of the Peace Conference and to ask my advice as to how it could best be done. I told him that the first step would be for Italy to grant, and to secure from the other Allied governments, recognition of the Yugoslav National Council as an Allied organization both in order to strengthen the position of the Yugoslavs in regard to Serbia and to promote the constitution of a united Serbo-Yugoslav State on a basis of political and religious equality. He asked me to act as his intermediary with the Yugoslavs but, in view of his past tergiversations, I declined and told him he must deal personally with Trumbitch as President of the Yugoslav National Council. Orlando said he was prepared to recognize the Yugoslav National Council and to promote its recognition by the other Allies; and he asked me to invite Trumbitch to call upon him.

This I also declined to do, saying that it would be an affront to Trumbitch, whom Orlando knew well, to be invited by a third party. Orlando then promised to invite Trumbitch himself but asked me to ask Trumbitch to be in readiness next day to receive an urgent summons. This I did, after warning Orlando that Trumbitch would be leaving Paris next evening for Geneva to take part in critical negotiations with the Serbian Prime Minister, Pashitch, and with sundry Yugoslav leaders from Austria-Hungary, for the constitution of a Serbo-Yugoslav Coalition Government. Therefore, if Orlando wished to see him, he should lose no time. Orlando promised to send for Trumbitch next morning and to agree with him upon the recognition of the Yugoslav National Council. Trumbitch, whom I saw at once, promised to stay indoors all next day in readiness for Orlando's summons.

But next morning, when I called at 10 A.M. upon M. Philippe Berthelot, the Director General of the French Foreign Office, and spoke optimistically of the Italo-Yugoslav outlook, he said:

"That is excellent, as far as words go. But do you know what Orlando has *done?* He called upon Clemenceau at 8 o'clock this morning and begged him, literally with tears in

his eyes, on no account to sanction any recognition of the Yugoslav National Council since Italy was determined not to recognize it; and I have reason to fear that Clemenceau has committed himself."

Thus, save for one episode towards the end of the Peace Conference, ended my relations with Signor Orlando. Once more he had played me false; and, as the sequel proved, there was method in his bad faith. That afternoon he attended a meeting of the Versailles Council; and, when it ended, about 5:30, he asked Beneš, who was also there, to tell Trumbitch that he (Orlando) wished to see him at once. Though Beneš reminded Orlando that Trumbitch had to leave for Geneva at 7 o'clock, Orlando insisted that, at any rate, Trumbitch should be told. Motoring back to Paris in haste, Beneš found Trumbitch at 6:30 packing his trunk and about to start for the Gare de Lyon. It was, in fact, impossible, as Orlando well knew, for any meeting to take place; but Orlando's object was to be able to say that he had asked Trumbitch to see him and that Trumbitch had not come.

As a result of the Geneva Conference with Pashitch, Trumbitch entered a Serbo-Yugoslav Coalition Cabinet as Foreign Minister and became a delegate to the Peace Conference. Signor Bissolati resigned from the Italian Cabinet at the end of December as a protest against the Orlando-Sonnino betrayal of the policy of the Rome Congress, but inadvertently gave the signal for a violent Italian Nationalist campaign in favour of the annexation of Fiume to Italy by saying, in a public speech, that though he had opposed the annexation of Dalmatia to Italy under the Treaty of London, he deplored the failure of the Treaty to assign to Italy an Italian city like Fiume. Thus tension grew between Italians and the Yugoslavs — a tension increased by the surrender of the Austro-Hungarian fleet to the Yugoslavs and by the ill-treatment in Italy of Yugoslav Naval officers who, confiding in Italian good faith, had crossed the Adriatic to inform the Italians that the Austro-Hungarian Fleet was ready to join the Allies. The ill-feeling thus engendered helped to poison the Peace Conference. With it and its effects I shall deal in due course.

A PLAN FOR THE PEACE CONFERENCE

While President Wilson was on his way to Europe in the *George Washington* — he landed at Brest on December 13, 1918 — Colonel House asked me how long the Conference need last and whether I had thought about its procedure. I sketched out a rough plan and said that, on some such basis, the main work of the Conference ought to be finished and peace signed by the middle of April at latest. He agreed in principle, but suggested several improvements and said that, according to his reckoning, the Conference ought to finish by the end of March. The only merit of this plan was its simplicity. Its defect was that it took no account of the personal ambitions and vanities of statesmen. It was, broadly, that oratory should be barred from the outset by a self-denying ordinance; that assent to the establishment of a league of nations should be the first point on the agenda of the Conference; that this assent having been secured, a nucleus for a league of nations should at once be formed out of the various inter-Allied bodies that had grown up during the war — such as the Maritime Transport Council, the Wheat Executive, and the other organizations composed of men who had already acquired the habit of working internationally for a common purpose; that some political advisers and international jurists of repute should be associated with them; and that to the body thus formed all questions not susceptible of immediate solution should be referred for impartial study and treatment. It was essential, I thought, that a league of nations should grow rather than be " made," that the Peace Conference should plant an acorn instead of trying to create a full-grown oak; and that, within a certain framework to be established from the beginning, the Covenant or Constitution of the League should be developed in the light of experience, not drafted in advance by theorists. The plan provided also for the immediate appointment of expert committees upon the principal questions of the Peace Settlement, these committees being instructed to report by definite dates to the heads of the Allied and Associated governments, and to cast the gist of their reports into the form of articles of a Peace Treaty. The

heads of governments would take no part in the work of the expert committees but would sit as a Supreme tribunal for the decision of controverted points, settling them in accordance with the terms of the Armistice and with the declared war aims of the Allies. When this had been done, the Treaty should be communicated to the ex-enemy governments and signed, the settlement of the outstanding questions, under examination by the embryonic League of Nations, being reserved for annexes to the main Treaty.

Colonel House asked me further to adumbrate ideal solutions of the most urgent peace problems; and I found his views very like my own. But we soon discovered that we had reckoned without our hosts. One of President Wilson's first acts was to withdraw the American representatives from the Inter-Allied Maritime Transport Council and other bodies where they had done splendid work. He would not hear of maintaining these bodies as a nucleus for a working League of Nations. Moreover, the Allied governments seemed to lose all sense of the value of time, once the actual fighting was over. They thought it more important to celebrate the victory than to make victory permanent by framing a just and durable peace without delay. Even after President Wilson reached Europe, more than a month was allowed to pass. The Allied sovereigns visited Paris one after the other. President Wilson was fêted there on his arrival, and soon afterwards went to London and Rome. Meanwhile, vast preparations were made to instal the various Allied Peace delegations in the largest Paris hotels. If, in point of size and equipment, the American "Commission to Negotiate Peace" left nothing to chance, the British delegation was a monster of wholly unwieldy dimensions. Its organizers achieved the miracle of housing many hundreds of delegates, officials, secretaries, experts, advisers, and detectives in a first-class hotel, the Majestic, and in feeding them in Paris with stale British food, badly cooked by British cooks and served by British waitresses. The Americans had likewise an hotel to themselves, the Crillon; the Italians another, the Belgians another, until Paris became a city of delegations separated from and entrenched against each other.

So strict were the regulations governing access to these fortresses that M. Clemenceau found himself "held up" by American detectives at the entrance to the Hotel Crillon, while Marshal Foch was placed under guard at the Hotel Majestic when seeking to attend a dinner to which the British Chief of Staff, General Sir Henry Wilson, had invited him.

The estranging effect of these arrangements might not have been so great had a coherent plan of work been adopted by the Conference from the outset. The first formal sitting on January 18th went well. President Wilson, Mr. Lloyd George, and M. Clemenceau all urged the need of working quickly. Unanimously and without debate the League of Nations was placed first on the agenda of the next meeting. Mr. Lloyd George summed up the situation in a few words: "During the war we have become friends. We must now work as brothers. The League of Nations is within you, here and now. It must be in our hearts. Let us work quickly and well." The informal meetings which preceded the opening sitting had, to some extent, cleared the ground and there seemed every prospect that Wilson, Lloyd George, and Clemenceau would work well together. But one serious misfortune — which proved to be a disaster — befell the Conference through the illness of Colonel House. A severe attack of influenza incapacitated him for any work during this critical formative period. Consequently, his guiding influence was absent when it was most sorely needed; and, before he could resume his activities, things had gone too far for him to mend.

"PUBLICITY" AND "THE SECRET TREATIES"

Apart from the question of organizing the Conference itself so that it could really work "quickly and well," the outstanding issues in the middle of January were those of the publicity to be given to the proceedings of the Conference, and the status of the Secret Treaties concluded between the European Allies during the war. Upon these questions Colonel House had very definite opinions. He wished the Conference to be organized efficiently, he desired the greatest possible degree of publicity

for its proceedings, he disliked the Secret Treaties, and he knew that President Wilson held their fate in his hands. President Wilson was full of goodwill and was not, at first, disposed to be dictatorial. As his official apologist, Mr. Ray Stannard Baker has shown in his "Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement," the President was, at the beginning in any case, eager for information and ready to take advice. But he did not know European statesmen and their methods as Colonel House knew them, nor had he the advantage of having been for some years in direct contact with those statesmen and of realizing the network of more or less secret engagements in which they were entangled. Consequently, he found himself handicapped when he came to meet men like Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Orlando, and Sonnino in personal conference. His strength lay in the appeal which his ideas and principles had made to public opinion in many European countries, but he knew too little of the workings of that public opinion to be able to handle it with a sure touch. I doubt, also, whether he ever realized that his popularity and prestige in Europe were due less to the fact that he was President of the United States, and therefore potentially the strongest man at the Peace Conference, than to the circumstance that he had expressed more aptly and more fully than any European leader the aspirations of the Allied peoples.

As a solution of the "Publicity Question," daily conferences were instituted between authorized spokesmen attached to each delegation and representatives of the press. These conferences became known as "the daily dope." They yielded some enlightenment but more often served to mask rather than to reveal the truth. Though I attended none of them I received reports from most of them and often smiled at the inadequacy of the information given. On the whole, the American press was best treated; and I cannot quarrel with Mr. Ray Stannard Baker's statement that "the secret spring of Lloyd George's policy — and his fear — throughout" the Conference was that he might be discredited by the divulgation in the press of his actual doings; or that, while "Clemenceau did not fear his press, because he could control most of it, Wilson could not

control a single newspaper in America; but he never feared the press because he thought he had American public opinion behind him."

Upon the Secret Treaties I find the following passage in my memorandum to Northcliffe of January 17, 1919:

> Some of President Wilson's people have been asking me to put forward arguments which the President could use in overcoming Balfour's attitude towards the Secret Treaties. Balfour hates the Secret Treaties, knows that if they are complied with they will ruin the Conference, but simply folds his hands and says that "England has signed and England must keep her word." He is really trusting Wilson to get him out of the hole, but Wilson does not want to put his foot down until he is quite sure where he is puttting it. So, I shall devote to-morrow's leader in the *Daily Mail* mainly to suggesting a line that Wilson might take.

The "line" was that, in December, 1916, President Wilson had asked the Allies to state openly what they were fighting for. In January, 1917, they made him publicly a joint reply. That reply was a factor in the entry of the United States into the war. It bound the Allies publicly to observe certain principles which automatically condemned the Secret Treaties. Which engagement was to stand, the anterior secret or the posterior public engagement? On January 5, 1918, Mr. Lloyd George defined British war aims in a manner likewise incompatible with the Secret Treaties. On January 8, 1918, President Wilson formulated his Fourteen Points. On November 11, 1918, the Allies and the United States signed with Germany an armistice based on thirteen of those points, British adhesion to one point — concerning the "Freedom of the Seas," being reserved. On that basis the Allies and the United States were solemnly and publicly pledged to make peace. That basis could not, by any exercise of casuistry, be reconciled with the Secret Treaties. The article added:

> The Conference must first provide for the prompt establishment of a working league of nations and lay down the principles by which the multifarious territorial and political problems of the peace must be judged. At the very outset it must answer the question whether those principles shall or shall not take precedence

of the secret treaties concluded between European Allied Governments in the earlier stages of the war. It is useless to mince words. Those treaties are as incompatible with the establishment of a league of nations as they are with the principles of nationality and of government by consent of the governed. Either the treaties or the League of Nations with its attendant principles must go — and it must not be the League of Nations or the principles.

Among some Allied statesmen there prevails a facile formalism which says, "We have signed a secret treaty which binds us to give away something that belongs to others. It is, doubtless, unjust, but honour compels us to keep our word. Treaties cannot be for us mere scraps of paper." This formal rectitude cannot stand against the superior rectitude of facts. He would be a hardy sinner against the light who should maintain, on the morrow of the greatest war ever fought for the redemption of humanity, that secret pacts concluded behind the backs of their peoples by unregenerate diplomatists, possess a higher validity than the engagements subsequently and publicly made by those same diplomatists, or their successors, with the knowledge and assent of their peoples. Yet that is the position consciously or unconsciously taken up by those who defend the Secret Treaties.

Unluckily, this question of principle was not settled from the start as it should have been. Afterwards it proved impossible to settle it at all. In the meantime, an ineffectual effort was made to organize the Conference in a businesslike way. On the British side Sir Maurice Hankey was placed at the head of the secretariate and began to do his work, within the limits imposed upon him, very efficiently. Mr. Lloyd George felt that the huge array of helpers, brought over from England to "assist" in the work of the Conference, was altogether excessive, and he ordered all establishments to be cut down by twenty-five per cent. Colonel House was still too unwell to take part in and still less to guide this tentative effort at organization. Nor could he be present at the initial sittings of what became known as the "Council of Ten," consisting of the five chief representatives and the Foreign Ministers of the Great Powers — America, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Japan — which sat until March 15th as the chief nucleus of the Conference. His illness delayed further the beginning of work upon the organization of the League of Nations which

President Wilson wished House to take in hand, while he himself should be in reserve as a sort of arbiter.

THE COUNCILS OF "TEN" AND "FOUR"

In this respect, at least, President Wilson had the salutary idea firmly in his mind that heads of governments should not be in the fighting line but should act as a General Staff to the Conference and as a Court of Supreme Instance to decide disputes; but he lost his hold upon it when he consented to attend the daily sittings of the Council of Ten at the French Foreign Office. In these sittings he, and the other chief Allied delegates, blundered often. It soon became known that they had blundered and, still worse, the various deputations whom they examined collectively became witnesses to the Council's ignorance. Had those deputations been heard, in the first place, by committees of experts whose reports would have been available for the guidance of the Council, these drawbacks would have been avoided; but since the "big men" were engaged, from the start, in the rough and tumble of the discussions, there remained nothing in reserve for the decision of controverted points, and those who ought to have been the ultimate judges wore out their strength and their influence in wrangling over details.

PRINKIPO

The first bad blunder was made on January 22nd when Mr. Lloyd George suddenly proposed that Bolshevist delegates should be invited to Paris. A similar suggestion had been made by a Jewish writer ten days before in the *Manchester Guardian*. The notion was that the Bolshevists and the Russian border peoples whom they were striving to destroy should cease fighting and meet in Paris alongside of the Peace Conference; but its practical effect would have been to accredit Bolshevism and to stimulate its growth in Central Europe. The French were aghast at this suggestion. Even President Wilson seems not altogether to have favoured the idea of bringing the Bolshevists to Paris, though he sanctioned a pro-

posal that delegates from the Conference should be sent to meet them at Prinkipo in the Sea of Marmora. Even this compromise found little favour in the Peace Conference — especially when the Bolshevists replied by offering the Allies economic and commercial concessions in return for recognition. Americans generally felt the Prinkipo proposal to be as bad a mistake as that which President Wilson had made in November, 1918, when he issued his appeal for a vote in favour of his Administration on the eve of the American Congressional Elections instead of appealing to the electorate from a non-party standpoint as the head of the whole American people. That mistake he would hardly have made had Colonel House then been at his side, just as he would scarcely have launched the Prinkipo idea if House had been well enough to advise him. Indeed, I found "the Colonel" seriously perturbed at the President's tendency to deal himself with questions which he did not really understand while immobilizing the whole Conference by his refusal to delegate work. Ultimately the Prinkipo proposal broke down. The Bolshevists refused to cease fighting and the various governments established on the borders of Russia declined to "sit at the same table with bandits and murderers." Dr. Kramarzh, who had just been appointed first Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia and head of the Czechoslovak delegation in Paris, came to see me in a state of despair. He said,

"We have been working hard to consolidate the position in Czechoslovakia. The reaction against the attempt made to assassinate me at Prague brought all our Socialists on to an anti-Bolshevist basis. We have 50,000 Czechoslovak troops in Siberia who saved the situation there for the Allies and whom we have, with difficulty, persuaded not to come home at once. This quasi-recognition of the Bolshevists without our opinion having been asked may upset the whole position. It is an unpardonable piece of lightmindedness."

"BIG" POWERS AND "SMALL"

Dissatisfaction grew rapidly with the tendency of the "big men" to decide important matters without consultation of

the smaller Allies. It was increased when, at the second plenary sitting, Clemenceau attempted to bully the small Powers and told them, in effect, to mind their own business. He declared that the Conference was mainly a concern of the Great Powers to which the Little Powers had graciously been invited; and that, had it not been for the desire of the Great Powers to form a league of nations, it was not certain whether the small Powers would have been invited at all. Too many small cooks might not only spoil the broth but dangerously protract the cooking. How this view tallied with the constant declarations of Allied statesmen that the war had been fought to uphold the rights of small nations, Clemenceau did not explain, even when the Belgian Foreign Minister, M. Paul Hymans, pluckily asked him to do so.

Nor was this the only unpleasant feature of the second plenary sitting. It revealed, for the first time in public, rivalries among the "big men." After President Wilson had made a good speech in moving the resolution that the League of Nations be created as an integral part of the Peace, Mr. Lloyd George attempted to score off him by an indirect reminder that the President had hitherto refrained from visiting the devastated regions of France, despite French wishes that he should go there. In my memorandum to Northcliffe of January 26th I find the following description of the proceedings:

> Wilson was quite evidently speaking to the people of the United States and to the masses in England, France, and Italy, far more than to the Conference itself. As a speaker he is superior to Clemenceau in manner and, I think, better than Lloyd George. He has a sense of style that neither of the others has, and he does not overdo the acting. Only towards the end, when talking of the "pulse" of the world, he seized the pulse of his right hand with the thumb and forefinger of his left and held them up before the audience as though he were a doctor counting the beats.
>
> Lloyd George then got home with a left backhander on to Wilson's jowl. His little speech was in his best platform style but he carefully chose his illustrations from the devastated regions of France by way of reminding the French that he had been there and had been impressed while their great Wilson had persistently jibbed at the suggestion that he, too, should go in order to be educated for the Peace Conference. Within two hours it was confidentially announced

that President Wilson would visit Rheims next day. *Post hoc ergo propter hoc?*

Next came Orlando, who waved his arms like a windmill and tried to be pathetic in bad French. He ended with a flamboyant tribute to "*la France généreuse et glorieuse*" which sounded as though he were trying to do a deal with the French so as to get them to back up Italy over the Italian Secret Treaty pending the settlement of the row that seems to be brewing between Wilson and the Italians.

A "row" was indeed brewing. American experts on the Adriatic question had been busy preparing data for President Wilson's discussions with Orlando and Sonnino. The latest meeting between them had gone very badly; and the Italians threatened Wilson that they would withdraw from the Conference altogether unless he "modified his principles." At the same time I gathered from a Rumanian delegate that the Italians and the Rumanians had made a compact to stand or fall together over the maintenance of the Secret Treaties. A passage in my memorandum to Northcliffe of January 27th began:

> Last Thursday Wilson was pretty nearly discouraged about the outcome of the Conference. He asked one of his most intimate friends whether it would be possible to pull the thing off. He had just had a stormy interview with Sonnino, who seems to have lost his temper and to have gone to the length of telling Wilson not to meddle in European affairs but to stick to his American last. When referring to Sonnino, Wilson clenched his fist and used unparliamentary language.

President Wilson was certainly growing nervous. Adverse American criticism of his management of the Conference and of his tendency to exclude from it Republican Senators and other outstanding public men not belonging to the Democratic Party, was beginning to tell upon him. Colonel House was also perturbed. The decline in the prestige of the President and of Lloyd George in consequence of the Prinkipo proposal and of their failure to bevel the edge of Clemenceau's sharp tongue when he bullied the small nations at the second plenary sitting caused him much anxiety. I told him that I had been "snowed under" since that sitting by delegates of all the small Powers who came to "weep into my waistcoat" over Clemen-

ceau's harshness. Venizelos had led the procession, which had been continued by the Rumanians, the Belgians, the Czechoslovaks, the Poles, and the Serbians. I had advised them not to conduct their defence in haphazard fashion by insisting, each country for itself, on its own special rights and claims, but to act together and to appoint one speaker — Venizelos for choice — to uphold the principles which the Great Powers themselves had enunciated, and to be reasonable in all their practical suggestions. They had seemed disposed to take this advice though they were one and all afraid of Clemenceau who, they thought, might take revenge upon them by mulcting them of territory or economically if they exposed themselves to his wrath.

Colonel House said that he not only agreed with this advice but would do his utmost to improve the situation. He said, "The President must be got out of the front line, and the system of leaving the small Powers in the cold must cease." He added that he would invite their representatives to see him one by one and would consult them both upon broad issues and upon their special interests. There must be no more springing of sudden decisions upon the Conference by the Great Powers. He asked me to keep an eye on the small Powers, to inform him at once of any particular dissatisfaction among them and to make appointments for the disgruntled to see him quickly.

Thanks chiefly to "the Colonel," the small Powers retrieved their position and secured representation on the various commissions that were being appointed; and M. Jules Cambon, the former French Ambassador in Berlin, handled them with so much tact that they agreed to pass the sponge over Clemenceau's speech.

This had hardly been done when a serious dispute arose between the Poles and the Czechoslovaks. There had been a preliminary agreement between them on the question of the mining district near Teshin, or Teschen, in Austrian Silesia. France had recognized the right of the Czechs to occupy those districts provisionally, but the Czechs held their hand pending similar recognition from England and America. Meanwhile,

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an Austrian-German paper published the news of the French authorization. Thereupon Polish troops took possession of the region and drove out the local Czechs. For a moment there was danger of serious fighting; but fortunately Masaryk in Prague and Beneš in Paris handled the matter so patiently that an immediate crisis was averted. I spent some busy hours in mediating between the Poles and the Czechs and ultimately helped to bring them together.

This incident seems to have shocked Lloyd George who, as he was subsequently to explain to the House of Commons, had "never heard of Teschen." Indeed, one of the charms of the Council of Ten for the statesmen forming it, was that it enabled them to sit, ostensibly as a Board of Examiners but really as an elementary school, and to receive instruction upon question after question of which they had either "never heard" or on which their notions were hazy. To do him justice, Lloyd George was then engaged in a stiff contest with some of the Dominion Prime Ministers upon the disposal of the German Colonies. He himself had come to accept the principle that those colonies should be held in trust by the governments which might occupy them as mandatories of the League of Nations. By the end of January, Mr. Lloyd George had brought his colleagues of the Dominions into line; and on January 22nd I supported publicly the principle he had advocated. I urged also that "the principle of trusteeship in regard to the German colonies and to Asia Minor is incompatible with the maintenance of the Secret Treaties in regard to Europe."

The question of the Secret Treaties had again become critical. President Wilson had summoned to Paris Professor Herron whom he regarded as an authority on the Adriatic question. On January 28th, Herron saw Sonnino, who not only rejected all idea of a compromise upon the Secret Treaty of London, but talked of preparing for another war a few years hence and declared that Italy must guard herself against the Franco-Serbian Alliance that was certain to be formed against her. Mr. Balfour, whom Herron saw immediately afterwards, explained that England had to buy the support of Italy and

Rumania during the war and could not refuse to pay the price even should it mean another war. Herron urged that the price ought not to be paid with other people's property; but Balfour seemed to think the whole business hopeless unless Wilson could get England and France out of the mess.

In this respect, however, the outlook was bad. By dealing at first hand with questions he did not really understand, President Wilson had lost ground, and had been obliged to accept improvised improvements upon the impracticable suggestions he made for the application of his general ideas. As I wrote in my memorandum to Northcliffe of January 29th:

> What is actually happening is that this Conference is becoming a parody of the Congress of Vienna, and that the work which was done there by Castlereagh, Talleyrand, and Metternich—who, after all, knew their business—is being attempted here by amateurs like Wilson and Lloyd George.

But on January 31st I added:

> The more I think over Lloyd George's attitude about the German colonies the more it seems to me that things may at last have taken a turn for the better. It is a great thing that the British Empire should have been first in setting an example of moderation and of self-control. Wilson should be able to use that example as an object lesson in dealing with other Powers; and as he must have some positive results to show his own people before he sails, there ought to be pretty rapid progress during the next ten days.

THE SECRET TREATIES AGAIN

Progress, however, brought Wilson and Lloyd George, with damnable insistence, back to the question of the Secret Treaties. Were those Treaties to override the principles of the Armistice or to be superseded by the Armistice? Had President Wilson, at that moment, faced frankly this question, had he staked upon it American participation in the Peace settlement, he would undoubtedly have carried the day and have reduced all the partisans of the Secret Treaties to reason if not to silence. But he wavered and temporized, sought to promote by negotiation settlements in which he really aban-

doned his unassailable position, and ultimately found himself driven to protest in a way that made his protest seem less an affirmation of principle than an expression of personal pique against one offending country — Italy.

At the end of January the first serious territorial question — in Europe — came up for discussion before the Council of Ten. It concerned the conflicting claims of Rumania and Serbia to the Banat, the region comprising three counties of Hungary between the rivers Maros, Theiss, and Danube, and inhabited mainly by Rumanes on the East, Germans (or Swabians), and Magyars in the centre, and Serbs on the West.

In the name of the Secret Treaty concluded in 1916 between Rumania and the Western Allies, Bratianu, the Rumanian Prime Minister, claimed the whole of the Banat. President Wilson asked him whether Rumanian claims went as far as Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, and Bratianu said they did. Vesnitch, the Serbian Minister in Paris, replied that Serbia could not recognize the Secret Treaty between the Allies and Rumania since she had not been consulted about it. Trumbitch, as Foreign Minister of the new Serbo-Croat-Slovene state, or Yugoslavia, also declared that, for his country, the Secret Treaty with Rumania was null and void. On the strength of the principle of nationality he insisted that the eastern part of the Banat should be given to Rumania, the western part to Serbia and that, though the Germans and Magyar inhabitants of the centre were enemy peoples, they should be treated with justice and be consulted as to their future.

Balfour, Clemenceau, Lloyd George, and Wilson all approved of this proposal. The Italians, Orlando and Sonnino, were irritated because they had agreed with Rumania to back her on condition that she should uphold the Secret Treaty of London between Italy, Great Britain, France, and Russia. Clemenceau asked Bratianu whether Rumania would assent to the consultation of the German and Magyar inhabitants of the Banat, but Bratianu hotly refused. Trumbitch then put forward his proposal officially and indicated that it would be the basis of the whole Yugoslav attitude — meaning that the

principles of nationality and of consultation of the peoples concerned would be invoked by Yugoslavia in regard to the Treaty of London also. At the end of the sitting he was warmly congratulated by Balfour, Clemenceau, and Wilson, while Sonnino held aloof.

On the evening of February 1st, I wrote to Northcliffe:

> The question of the Treaty of London seems likely to come up soon. Wilson will certainly want to settle it before he leaves for the United States. If he can settle it on the lines suggested by Trumbitch he will be able to claim,
>
> (1) that the League of Nations is in a fair way to be established.
>
> (2) that the mandatory principle has been adopted in regard to the German colonies and Asia Minor; and
>
> (3) that the Secret Treaties have gone by the board.
>
> But if the Treaty of London is not quashed, his opponents will be able to twit him with having shied at the worst fence of all. Thus there should be interesting developments shortly.

WILSON AS ARBITRATOR

The "interesting developments" soon came. On February 2nd, when I happened to be laid up with a chill, Major Bonsall, one of Colonel House's assistants, came to me with an important message. President Wilson, he said, was worried by the refusal of the Czechoslovaks to sign a provisional agreement with the Poles, about Teschen and Silesia, that had been drawn up by the commissioners whom the Conference had appointed to go to Warsaw. He appealed to me to do my utmost to persuade the Czechs to sign forthwith and not to wait for the agreement to be imposed upon them by the Conference. Bonsall said also that the President wished to have the dispute between the Italians and Yugoslavia settled within a week. He urged me to extract from the Yugoslavs their final terms so that, if those terms were just, the President might insist upon Italian acceptance of them.

Neither task seemed likely to be easy. Fortunately, Beneš came at once on receipt of a telephone message from me and, after some discussion, agreed to sign the provisional agreement about Silesia and to write officially to Clemenceau, as Presi-

dent of the Conference, to this effect. I have never known Beneš miss a point by pedantic insistence upon unessentials when something more essential was to be gained or retained by taking a common-sense view of things.

Trumbitch, who came to see me in the evening, was a much harder nut to crack. He was also in a position more difficult than that of Beneš, who could always count upon the support of Masaryk for any reasonable course. Trumbitch, on the other hand, could always reckon that the Serbian Prime Minister, Pashitch, would, if possible put spokes in his wheel, and that the uncompromising views of some Slovenes and Croats would make his path thorny. Until long after midnight Trumbitch and I fought the old battle over again. Notwithstanding all my friendly pressure, he declined to commit himself to any definite terms for a settlement with Italy. At last I told him that, unless the Southern Slavs came into line within a week, they would probably lose the support of Wilson and be left to the tender mercies of Italy, to whom England and France were bound by the Secret Treaty. If he would put forward a proposal that Wilson could adopt, I promised to get him either a personal interview with the President or a special hearing before the Council of Ten.

Still Trumbitch wavered and hesitated. But next morning his friend and fellow delegate, Smodlaka, came to see me, after conferring with Trumbitch, and brought a map showing six different lines of possible settlement, including an extreme Southern Slav line on the west, and an extreme Italian line on the east. In his view, something between the two central and most moderate lines would be acceptable. Roughly, these lines left the centre of the Istrian Peninsula as debatable ground, while the eastern portion would go to Yugoslavia, and the coast from Pola to Trieste would go to Italy. Seton-Watson copied all the lines on to an official map which he took to Colonel House and to the American expert, Major Douglas Johnson, on my behalf. The Americans were delighted and proposed to give the map at once to President Wilson who was to see the Italian Prime Minister, Orlando, very shortly. Arthur Hugh Frazier, the well-known American diplomatist

who was working with Colonel House as diplomatic aide-de-camp, came to tell me of this proposal; but I suggested that, if possible, the President should see Trumbitch before seeing Orlando. Frazier therefore arranged for Trumbitch to be received an hour before Orlando was due.

When Trumbitch entered, Wilson showed him the map and asked him to say definitely what division of the debatable region he would be prepared to accept. Trumbitch answered that Southern Slav confidence in Wilson's sense of justice was so strong that he would be prepared to submit everything to Wilson's arbitration and to accept his award.

Wilson objected that he could not arbitrate except at the request of both sides, and urged Trumbitch to make an official proposal to Clemenceau, as President of the Conference, that the settlement of the question should be left in the President's hands. This Trumbitch agreed to do; and, later in the day, brought me the drafts of his letters to Clemenceau and to President Wilson.

In the meantime Wilson had received Orlando to whom he also showed the map. When told of the Yugoslav suggestion that the difficulty should be settled by American arbitration, Orlando accepted in principle but said that, before accepting officially, he must consult his Cabinet. But he gave the President distinctly to understand that the official Italian decision was likely to be favourable. Nevertheless, I warned Frazier and Colonel House that Orlando's personal undertakings might be one thing and effective Italian policy quite another. In fact, when the official letters from Trumbitch to Clemenceau and Wilson reached the Council of Ten on February 11th, the Italians were, or pretended to be, terribly upset. Clemenceau therefore postponed the discussion. After the sitting, Orlando told Frazier that, though the Southern Slav proposal embarrassed him horribly, he could not find a good reason for refusing it, and actually asked Frazier to suggest a reason. Frazier said that there was every reason why the Italians should accept, especially as the proposed arbitration affected only territories to which Italian claims were contested by

the Southern Slavs, not to the whole of the territories claimed by Italy.

Next morning, February 12th, Orlando went again to Wilson, moaned and wept, said that the Southern Slavs had taken him by the throat, but finally promised to give a reply as soon as he had been able to consult the King and his colleagues in Rome on the 14th — the day when President Wilson was to leave Paris for the United States. In mid-ocean, however, President Wilson received by wireless the news that the Italian Cabinet had rejected his arbitration, Sonnino having apparently declared that he would resign rather than accept it. Thus the Italians missed a chance, not only of securing the goodwill of the United States but of setting an example which would have created a precedent for the treatment of other controverted territorial questions. Orlando's inconsistency in supporting warmly the League of Nations Covenant and the principle of arbitration while declining to submit to arbitration the question of chief interest to Italy was typical of his whole character.

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS COVENANT

So much has been written upon the drafting of the Covenant of the League of Nations, notably by Mr. Ray Stannard Baker in his " Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement," that detailed reference to it would be superfluous. President Wilson was eager that the Covenant should be completed before he made his flying visit to the United States; but both he and Colonel House were then anxious that discussion of the Covenant should not delay indefinitely the drafting of the Peace Treaty itself. Therefore, from February 3rd until March 14th, the League of Nations Commission met almost daily or, rather, nightly, in Colonel House's big room at the Hotel Crillon to frame the Covenant, the evening being chosen in order not to interfere with the work of the Council of Ten. House was chief impresario. President Wilson sat at the head of a long table with Orlando on his right, " the Colonel " sitting on the left between the President and the British representatives, Lord Robert Cecil and General Smuts. MM. Léon Bourgeois

and Larnaude represented France; Baron Makino and Viscount Chinda, Japan; while M. Venizelos, who had proved himself to be one of the few really big men at the Peace Conference, represented Greece and more than Greece.

The most serious hitch came on February 11th when Wilson absolutely declined to accept the French demand for the creation of an international force that should operate under the executive control of the League of Nations. M. Bourgeois urged the French view with much eloquence and pertinacity. Wilson claimed that the Constitution of the United States did not permit of any such limitation upon its sovereignty; and Lord Robert Cecil took a similar view in regard to the British Empire. The French stood their ground and declined to surrender the claim which, in their view, could alone prevent the League of Nations Covenant from being a philosophical treatise, devoid of practical authority. Thus the sitting broke up towards midnight on February 11th, leaving the position very strained. That night, however, Mr. Oscar Straus arrived in Paris from New York with a mandate from ex-President Taft and the American League to Enforce Peace. As I wrote to Northcliffe, on Thursday, February 12th:

> Straus got to work at once with Bourgeois and, by all accounts, including his own, he seems to have found a way out of the difficulty. This morning Wilson was so upset that he decided to leave Paris to-morrow night and to go home without the League of Nations scheme in his pocket. But it is hoped that by to-night a text will have been produced to which everybody may be able to agree. If so, Wilson will not go until Saturday or Sunday night, and there will be a plenary sitting on Saturday at which Wilson will announce the draft Covenant.

Simultaneously I wrote for the Paris *Daily Mail* of Friday, February 13th, an article called "The Difficulty." Its principal passage ran:

> The difficulty consists in the fact that the Peace Conference is engaged upon a double task. It has to frame a peace with Germany and to secure from her adequate reparation for her misdeeds. It has also to frame a peace for the world at large that shall form a valid protection against future wars when the immediate lessons of

this war have been forgotten or have become merely historical memories.

Some Allied countries concentrate their minds almost exclusively upon the first aspect of this double task. Others think chiefly of the second aspect. The real difficulty is to find a common denominator between the two.

This common denominator can be found only in a wisely constructed plan for the League of Nations. If the plan be made with exclusive reference to the conditions of the Great War and the problems to be solved in the immediate future, it may prove unacceptable to some important nations and unworkable in practice. It must not be made, so to speak, solely under the influence of shell-shock.

On the other hand, it must not be too far removed from the practical lessons of the war. It must not be too other-worldly.

The way out is to create a healthy embryo and to let it grow. No man can tell exactly how it will grow. But it is certain that it will grow into a great and powerful organism exactly in proportion as the spirit in which it is created is honest and unselfish.

If it be not made now, it may never be made and, for lack of it, the nations may revert to the bad old system of alliances and armaments, the parent of future wars and stepmother of civilization.

This article seemed to me mild enough. Yet, early on the 13th, Colonel House telephoned to ask me to come at once to the Hotel Crillon. I found him smiling but somewhat worried.

"You have got me into a pretty bad hole," he said.

"How?" I asked.

"That editorial of yours in the *Daily Mail* this morning."

"Don't you agree with it?"

"I do. But there's the rub. I agree with it so much that last night, towards midnight, when the sitting of the League of Nations Commission was over, I took 'the Governor' [Colonel House's name for the President] into a corner and told him what I thought. I pitched into him hard — and almost word for word in the language of your editorial this morning. Now, how am I to persuade 'the Governor' that I did not write that article myself or that I did not ask you to write it so as to put public pressure on him?"

"When did we last see or communicate with each other, my dear Colonel?" I asked.

"More than a week ago, I think," he answered.

"Well," I said, "I can produce convincing evidence that my article was dictated before 8 o'clock last evening and documentary proof that it was actually in type at the *Daily Mail* office by 10 P.M.; and you only spoke to the President at midnight."

"I don't doubt it," said the Colonel, "but it does not mend matters much. Nothing on earth will convince the President that I did not get you to write that article."

"If the President is so touchy and will not listen to reason," I replied, "I am sorry for him and for you. But just as you have never interfered with my independence of judgment, so I cannot allow the President's susceptibilities to interfere with it; and every time I may think that something ought to be said in the public interest, I propose to say it."

Unwittingly, I had, indeed, offended the President, who wished to plant a full-grown oak, to make a complete league of nations with a rigid constitution fixed in advance, whereas Colonel House, I, and others favoured the "acorn" method. Despite all explanations, the President remained convinced that, in some way or other, Colonel House had tried to put pressure upon him through me; and this incident, with others in regard to which the Colonel was equally innocent, may well have helped to turn President Wilson against his wisest, most unselfish and most devoted helper. He certainly ignored Colonel House's advice as to the treatment of Republican Senators after landing in the United States. He invited, indeed, some of the leading Senators to dinner but, instead of consulting with them and listening to their views on the Covenant, he lectured and hectored them with the result that feeling in the United States became increasingly hostile to him. If the American Senate ultimately threw over the League of Nations Covenant and the Treaty, the fault lies chiefly with President Wilson's mistaken tactics and autocratic disposition. Neither the biting articles in which eminent American writers like Frank Simonds represented the League of Nations as something that had been "put over on" the President by astute British manœuvres, nor Republican resentment of the Presi-

dent's electoral message of November, 1918, would have availed to defeat the Treaty had President Wilson possessed a tithe of the tact and circumspection which made of Colonel House the ablest peacemaker at the Peace Conference.

Nevertheless, Mr. Wilson overcame his obstinacy of February 12th and 13th sufficiently to agree to the draft Covenant and to present it to the Conference on February 14th in a hopeful speech. "Armed force is in the background of this programme," he said, "but it is in the background, and if the moral force of the world will not suffice, the physical force of the world shall. But that is in the last resort, because this is intended as a constitution of peace, not as a league of war." He also foreshadowed it as "a League that can be used for coöperation in any international matter."

In commenting upon this sitting next day I wrote in the Paris *Daily Mail:*

> It was impossible to listen to the document which President Wilson read, to his comments upon it and to the declarations of the Allied representatives, without feeling that the affairs of the world were being lifted into new dimensions. The old dimensions of national individualism, secrecy of policies, competitive armaments, forcible annexations for selfish purposes and unqualified State sovereignty, were raised, if only for an instant, to a higher plane on which the organized moral consciousness of peoples, the publicity of international engagements and of government by the consent and for the good of the governed, became prospective realities.
>
> How long will the instant last? . . . No man can yet say. All that can be said is that yesterday a sense that something new, something irrevocable, had been done, pervaded the Conference Hall. All the speeches were made in the tone of men who were not, indeed, afraid of their own handiwork, but were obviously conscious of the boldness of attempting to frame a new charter for civilized and uncivilized humanity.

AN EDITOR "IN PARTIBUS"

While these big things were being done, things smaller, yet important to me personally, had happened. Towards the end of January, I had received a hint that a change was impending in the editorship of *The Times,* and I had let it be known

that I thought any change undesirable. More than once, in the course of 1918, I had helped to remove misunderstandings between my friend and immediate chief, Mr. Geoffrey Dawson, the editor, and Lord Northcliffe; and I hoped that, on this occasion also, my view might carry weight. But, on February 7th, I was informed that Mr. Geoffrey Dawson had resigned, that if I wished to accept the succession to him I could have it but that, should I decline it, a new editor might be chosen outside the staff of *The Times*. Simultaneously, a telegram from Lord Northcliffe asked me to meet him at Avignon on February 9th, to discuss the position. I met him there and, seated in the ferry boat that plies to and fro across the Rhone, agreed to accept the editorship on certain conditions. Of these the principal was that, after placing the facts of a situation before Northcliffe, and suggesting a policy in regard to them, I should, once he had agreed to the policy, be as free to carry it out as I had been in carrying out the policies I had suggested for propaganda against the enemy. I stipulated also that he should not initiate any policies of his own, or promise to any statesman or political party the support of any of the newspapers which he controlled, without previous consultation and agreement with me. I, for my part, should always inform him as fully as possible and consult him upon important matters whenever he might be within reach of telegraph or telephone.

To these conditions Lord Northcliffe agreed; but he added another which was calculated notably to increase my responsibility. He wished me to direct not only the policy of *The Times* but that of the *Daily Mail* and of his other political journals in order that his various newspapers might not advocate conflicting policies. He believed that, with tact, I could work harmoniously with the editors of those newspapers and thus consolidate their influence.

This was a complication for which I had not bargained. I knew that since 1908, the relationship between *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* had been a constant anxiety to my predecessors, Mr. George E. Buckle and Mr. Geoffrey Dawson. The traditions and the methods of the two journals and, to

some extent, the temperaments of their respective staffs, impeded harmonious coöperation. Though their organizations were distinct and there was no financial connection between them, the tendency of the public was to bracket them together and to give some heed to the gibe that *The Times* was merely the threepenny edition of the *Daily Mail*. Yet, as long as Northcliffe controlled *The Times*, he was a living link, sometimes a very live link, between the two journals. Since the position could not be altered, it had to be faced; and it seemed to me preferable that the policy of the *Daily Mail* should be laid down by the editor of *The Times*, in agreement with the editor of the *Daily Mail*, rather than that the *Daily Mail* should pursue, under Northcliffe's personal influence, a policy divergent from that of *The Times*, and that *The Times* should now and again seem to be urged into line with its younger and more vivacious contemporary by proprietorial pressure. And, apart from considerations of dignity and consistency, I thought it better for the *Daily Mail* to be called a penny edition of *The Times* than for *The Times* to be called a threepenny edition of the *Daily Mail*. Therefore, after some reflection, I agreed to Northcliffe's proposal and trusted to the loyalty of that good fellow and first-rate journalist, Mr. Thomas Marlowe, the editor of the *Daily Mail*, to make coöperation not only possible but harmonious — a trust which was abundantly justified throughout the difficult years that lay before me.

Returning to Paris on February 10th, I waited until President Wilson had sailed for America to go over to London and arrange with Geoffrey Dawson and my principal colleagues for the editing of the paper until the Peace Conference should be far enough advanced to make London rather than Paris the centre of public interest. Like me, all my colleagues regretted Dawson's retirement even more than he regretted it himself, for he was very tired and the strain of the war had told heavily upon him. He, for his part, did all he could to smooth the way for me, and our relations were unimpaired by the change. I had always worked loyally with him and he with me — and when, in course of time, changes of circumstances made him my successor as I had been his, I handed back to him the pre-

mier position in the journalistic world in the same spirit of confidence and friendship with which he had handed it to me.

In deciding not to take over the active editorship at once, two considerations influenced me. Mr. G. S. Freeman, who had been Dawson's assistant, consented to be my deputy and to edit the paper during my absence. His experience, goodwill and quiet efficiency were guarantees that *The Times* would not suffer, while his popularity with the staff ensured him their loyal support. On the other hand, I discovered in London that a thick mist veiled the Peace Conference from the British public. Despite voluminous telegrams from Paris, London was as out of touch with the inner workings of the Peace Conference as if it were being held at the other end of the earth; and since the fate of Europe and of a large part of the world outside Europe was being settled in Paris, my duty was obviously to stay there as long as might be necessary.

THE COVENANT AND THE TREATY

So to Paris I returned, on February 24th, in the company of Lord Robert Cecil, who was eager to push forward arrangements for including neutral States in the League of Nations. During President Wilson's absence in the United States, Colonel House was doing his utmost to make up for lost time and to get the Conference on to a business footing. His task was made easier by the simultaneous absence in England of Mr. Lloyd George, whose somewhat erratic methods had contributed quite as much as the preconceived notions of President Wilson to prevent efficient and expeditious work. Between Mr. Balfour, the acting head of the British Delegation, and Colonel House, there was close and active sympathy. Unlike President Wilson, both of them wished the League of Nations to be put to work at once in an embryonic form and to be entrusted with some of the business which the Conference itself could not do. Very curiously, the French were disposed to take President Wilson's view that the League should not be constituted or set to work until the Covenant had been finally sealed, signed, and delivered. The issue lay really be-

tween the realists and the formalists, the men of life and the pedants. Having secured a decision on January 25th that the League of Nations should be an integral part of the Peace Treaty, President Wilson was anxious to subordinate the making even of a preliminary peace to the elaboration of a complete League of Nations Covenant. Colonel House, on the other hand, with much stronger practical sense than Wilson possessed, wished to conclude the main points of a general peace as quickly as possible, to set up a working league of nations in some form and to let it coöperate in making the final peace. Mr. Ray Stannard Baker's criticism on Colonel House ("Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement," vol. I, p. 306) —

> Instinctively and emotionally he [Colonel House] was as truly liberal as the President and he was a loyal supporter of the League of Nations; but he had never thought through. He never quite knew where he was, but he was always optimistic. There was nothing hard, clear, sure, definite in his intellectual processes —

is at once just and unjust. Colonel House was a practical man in a world of men — and the Peace Conference was essentially a world of men. President Wilson was an idealist logician and, at times, a pedant. He never understood the French proverb that "Better is the enemy of good"; and, in striving after theoretical perfection, he frequently missed the practically attainable. During his absence in the United States, Colonel House worked heroically to put the Conference on to the basis where it ought to have been placed from the outset; and he made such progress that, when President Wilson returned to Paris on March 13th, a little energy and common sense would have secured the conclusion of the Peace Treaty, in all its essential features, by the middle of April.

But, in the meantime, President Wilson had compromised the chances of a rapid peace by his own action in the United States. Instead of following House's advice that he should take the chief Republican Senators into his confidence, explain matters to them tactfully, and seek to gain, if not their support, at least their friendly neutrality, President Wilson had

"put their backs up." Thereafter the struggle between them and him became a struggle to show who would be strongest, and the League of Nations issue fell to the level of an American party contest. The chance of agreement upon the League was, in reality, compromised by President Wilson's speech at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York on March 4, 1919, when he said, just before he sailed again for France:

> When that Treaty comes back, gentlemen on this side will find the Covenant not only in it, but so many threads of the Treaty tied to the Covenant, that you cannot dissect the Covenant from the Treaty without destroying the whole vital structure.

Evidently the President did not imagine that the American Senate would ever dare to reject the Peace Treaty. But in playing American "politics" with an issue of supreme importance, he practically condemned the Peace Conference to long months of unnecessary wrangling. So strong was feeling in Paris at the time that I wrote in the Paris *Daily Mail* of March 6th, the following article:

> Any statesman of sound sense and reasonable knowledge who has busied himself with the issues before the Peace Conference during the last two months, could sketch in twenty-four hours the main lines of a fair peace settlement. With the help of honest experts, he could fill in his sketch within a week. If the Allied statesmen cannot do jointly what most of them could do singly, they had better entrust one of their number with the task and leave him to do it.
>
> What would he do first? He would undoubedly recognize that the foremost requirement is now to make peace with Germany. He would take the reports of the Allied officers who have recently returned from Germany upon the conditions of that country and, in the light of them, would conclude that lack of food, lack of employment, lack of means of transport, and lack of organization are likely to reduce the German people quickly to a state of chaotic anarchy unless remedies be applied. He would see that friendly peoples in Central Europe are in no better plight. He would recognize that, since effective remedies cannot be applied until the peace preliminaries are signed, the preliminaries must be presented at once to the enemy. To this end he would instruct the expert military, naval, economic, and political advisers of the Allied governments to complete these preliminaries and would communicate them forthwith to the enemy

representatives, insisting that they must be accepted within ten days of presentation.

Upon their acceptance he would send into Germany Allied military and civilian commissioners to see that the terms were carried out, on pain of complete suspension of the supplies which should be made available from the moment the preliminaries were signed.

He would then settle, in the light of the reports of the special commissioners of the Conference, such territorial questions between the Allies as are ripe for immediate treatment, having regard in each case to the principle of nationality and of government by the consent of the governed and to the vital economic interests of the peoples most concerned.

Questions not ripe for immediate settlement he would refer to the Executive Council of the League of Nations which should be appointed and begin to work pending the final revision of the Covenant.

COLONEL HOUSE AND PRESIDENT WILSON

Colonel House told me on March 6th that he agreed entirely with this article. He was full of hope that, when he should meet the President at Brest on March 13th, the work which had been done would receive full approval, and that matters would then go forward rapidly to a successful conclusion. But, when he met the President, he met also a bitter disappointment. He found him determined to put the whole Covenant into the text of the Treaty before any Peace were concluded, and to secure the adoption of all amendments to the Covenant before other and more pressing matters were settled. Colonel House's affection for the President led him to give way on this point and to assent, however reluctantly, to the wrecking of the work he had done during the President's absence. Mr. Ray Stannard Baker writes on this point ("Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement," vol. I, pp. 307, 308):

Colonel House met the President when he arrived at Brest and rode up to Paris with him. From this time onward there began to grow up a coldness between the two men to which I shall refer again, for it had an important and unfortunate bearing upon the Peace Conference. This coldness was not due to trivial personal causes or to little mean jealousies, as popularly reported, although

it had, indeed, personal and trivial aspects, but was based upon far deeper failures in understanding and action.

When all is said, the course of the Council during that crucial month was more stupid than designing. It was tremendously human. Wilson, the leader and prophet, who was demanding such discipline and self-sacrifice, had gone away; they set up a golden calf. They slipped back into courses and methods they understood; they took what seemed the easy way to get what they wanted.

The divergence of view between House and Wilson at this juncture was the second disaster to the Peace Conference. The first had been House's illness at the beginning of the Conference. Though House bore up and did his utmost, as I shall show, to push things forward and to work loyally with the President when once he had subordinated his own better judgment to Wilson's political necessities, hope of bringing things to a quick and satisfactory conclusion was all but lost.

THE FACTOR OF TIME

It has sometimes been argued that President Wilson's cardinal mistake was in deciding to come to Europe at all. For many reasons, it would certainly have been better had he remained at Washington and had he placed Colonel House at the head of an American delegation on which both of the principal American parties would have been represented. Colonel House knew much of Europe. President Wilson knew little. House had proved his ability to deal successfully with European statesmen of all countries. Wilson was temperamentally unfitted for direct personal intercourse with them. House, though a Democrat, possessed the confidence of many Republican leaders who regarded Wilson with suspicion if not with dislike. Wilson, moreover, was far more of a "politician" than House, though House was a greater master of the political game than he. House, besides, was unselfish and self-effacing, whereas Wilson was self-assertive. If Wilson had not chosen to come to Europe, House would probably have insisted that the Peace Conference should meet within a few weeks of the Armistice; and he would certainly have placed the work of the Conference upon a sound basis from the beginning. He

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knew that, while the Conference would be talking and deciding, things would be moving, and that a situation which would be amenable to firm treatment in December, 1918, or January, 1919, might get out of hand by February or March. He dreaded the effect upon Wilson of personal contact with the details of the European situation, and though I never heard him discuss the President's decision to come to Europe, his constant wish was to keep the President as much as possible out of the fray and to preserve for him in Paris the advantages of detachment and perspective that he would have enjoyed in Washington.

This question has, however, merely academic interest. The full story of Colonel House's efforts to serve the President, the United States and the interests of peace, amid difficulties almost insuperable, could be told by himself alone, and he is probably too modest ever to tell it. He may not have had the President's hard grasp upon the principles of the kind of peace Wilson desired, but he was no less devoted than he to the League of Nations as the only international safeguard against a recurrence of war. Like Wilson, too, he wished the League to be inseparable from the Peace though he did not think it essential that every "i" should be dotted and every "t" crossed in a complete Covenant before the League were allowed to work. He seems to have conceived the framework of the League as something more closely akin to the British Constitution than to the Constitution of the United States, something that could grow from small beginnings into a large beneficence and gain authority and experience from work actually done. In a word, he was a practical as distinguished from a philosophical idealist; and President Wilson never did a worse day's work for himself, or for the cause he wished to serve, than when he overrode House's views on March 13, 1919.

Many efforts had been made before to drive a wedge between Wilson and House. Some American financial interests had done their worst without success. Mr. Lloyd George had repeatedly sought to eliminate the influence of Colonel House so that he might deal the more easily with the President. But until the President was induced to suspect that, in his

eagerness to conclude a satisfactory preliminary peace and to set the League of Nations to work at once, House was departing from "Wilsonian principles," these efforts were of little avail. Thereafter Wilson gradually gave ear to other counsellors, until the final breach was effected by the influence of those who were jealous of House's eminence, and by gossip mongers who alleged that Colonel House's son-in-law, Gordon Auchincloss, who worked with him at the Hotel Crillon, had committed the unpardonable sin of speaking disrespectfully of the President. The idea of *lèse-majesté* might have been overthrown in Europe by the war, but it certainly survived in the immediate neighbourhood of President Wilson during the Peace Conference. One of its effects was to cause Colonel House to be condemned unheard. The only real excuse for President Wilson's conduct towards his wisest and most faithful friend, as for many of his strange fits of obstinacy and petulance after his return from the United States to Paris, is that the malady which presently laid him low was already upon him.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE PEACE CONFERENCE. II.

1919

DURING President Wilson's absence in the United States the American delegation in Paris had worked hard at the question of the left bank of the Rhine. The ideas advocated in the Foch military memorandum of January 10th had caused much misgiving, though the Memorandum itself was not presented officially to President Wilson until March 14th. The possibility of setting up a Rhineland Republic was being discussed and, in my report to Northcliffe on March 3rd, I deprecated any territorial arrangements that might create "fifteen or twenty years hence a *casus belli* over what would be a natural movement towards German national reunion." Throughout the first fortnight of March this question was uppermost. On March 14th I wrote to Northcliffe:

> It is very important that we should not back up any French ideas of permanent annexation or practical annexation on the left bank of the Rhine, but it is equally important that the French should not get the impression that we are fighting them about the left bank of the Rhine in order to squeeze concessions out of them in regard to Syria. My own view, which is very largely shared by reasonable Frenchmen and by Americans, is that, whatever Allied occupation of the left bank of the Rhine there may be, should be made contingent, as regards time, upon the payment of reparation by Germany; that the Rhine should be treated as an international stream which cannot be fortified; and that there should be no German fortifications within thirty miles of the right Bank.

Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Philip Kerr, his confidential secretary, were persistently opposed to the French view; but instead of seeking a formula that would satisfy French demands for security while safeguarding German territorial

integrity in future, they sought to lay down hard and fast principles that were in violent conflict with French ideas. President Wilson, for his part, declined to sanction the military terms of the peace with Germany on which Colonel House and the American experts had agreed; and he gave out a notice that the League of Nations Covenant, amended and completed, must form part of any Peace Treaty. At first Lloyd George seemed to support him. On March 17th, however, Lloyd George was so upset by the victory of an Opposition candidate in the by-election at West Leyton that he proposed to return to London at once and to leave the Peace Conference to look after itself. For some reason or other he also became angry with Wilson. Violent attacks upon the President appeared in a number of British Coalition organs. These attacks came back from London by wireless and offended Wilson deeply. In my report to Northcliffe on March 18th I wrote:

> This afternoon I met House who took me for a walk and talked very earnestly. He gave me to understand that the President attributed these attacks to Lloyd George and told me of a very straight talk he (House) had had with Lloyd George earlier in the afternoon. I hope the storm will blow over before real harm is done.

THE QUESTION OF DANZIG

Meanwhile, the British press attacks upon Wilson continued, especially in the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Telegraph*. Again they came back by wireless. Lord Robert Cecil checked them, however, by informing the British correspondents in Paris, on behalf of the Prime Minister, that the British delegation was in favour of incorporating the League of Nations Covenant immediately in the peace terms. But next day, March 19th, another incident occurred. The Council of Ten received the report of the special Commission on Poland which had worked extremely well under the Chairmanship of Sir Eyre Crowe. The report was unanimous. It assigned the port of Danzig to Poland and gave the Poles an enclave of several hundred thousand Germans in East Prussia. Wilson agreed that this was inevitable, since Danzig was the only available

Polish outlet to the sea. Lloyd George had also expressed privately his agreement with the report and had actually informed a British member of the Commission on Poland that he would support it in the Council of Ten. But, when the Council met, Lloyd George moved that the report be rejected or sent back to the Commission for revision. Surprise was felt in the Council at this sudden change, and there was much speculation among its members and in the French press as to the cause of it. The underlying idea of the proposed Danzig settlement had been that, if the Conference stretched a point in order to satisfy a clear economic need of Poland, it would be the better able to insist upon a more moderate assessment of Polish claims to the east, and thus to prevent constant friction between the Poles and their eastern neighbours. Nevertheless, the Danzig report was sent back to the Commission, which confirmed it unanimously. Lloyd George's attitude irritated Wilson intensely. One of his intimate advisers told me, on March 21st, that "The President is coming to feel more and more that the only way out is for him to stick absolutely to his principles, to make a firm stand as the protector of small nations, and have nothing to do with all the bargaining and haggling that is going on." On the same day Mr. Lloyd George received the British journalists and departed from what he had authorized Lord Robert Cecil to say on March 18th, in the name of the British delegation, as to the incorporation of the League of Nations Covenant in the Peace Treaty. When he was reminded of Lord Robert Cecil's declaration he exclaimed, "That's awkward!" and changed the subject.

Before meeting the British journalists, Mr. Lloyd George had, that afternoon, taken exception in the Council of Ten to the language of the French press. People in that room, he declared, had been informing the French press about the attitude of the various Peace delegations towards the Polish question. Consequently, slurs upon him had appeared in three French papers. This sort of thing made Paris impossible as a meeting place for the Conference. If it continued he would demand that the Conference be removed to a neutral country.

He must insist upon an enquiry to find out who had informed the French press, and he demanded satisfaction for the reflections made upon him. An enquiry was ordered — without much result. Instructions were also issued to all British and French delegates not to receive or to communicate with any representative of the press.

One effect of this incident was to lead to the formation of the Council of Four, composed of President Wilson, M. Clemenceau, Mr. Lloyd George, and Signor Orlando, though the reason privately given at the moment was that Sonnino's obstinacy had become so great an impediment to work in the Council of Ten that it had been decided to eliminate him by confining important discussions to the British, French, and Italian Prime Ministers and the President of the United States. True, the Council of Four, properly so-called, was not instituted until later, but its beginning was certainly a secret meeting on March 20th, at Mr. Lloyd George's flat, between President Wilson and the chief British, French, and Italian representatives. This meeting discussed the question of Syria and the Franco-British agreements in regard to it, as well as the Secret Treaties in general, with the result that confusion became worse confounded. President Wilson came out of the meeting cursing everybody and everything, saying that he had done nothing but talk for forty-eight hours and was getting disgusted with the whole business. Colonel House said to me ironically, "We are going along so fast that it makes me giddy. Snails are race horses compared with these big statesmen." His son-in-law, Gordon Auchincloss, added that the Conference in general was in such a state of muddle that unless the Presient could soon get on to firm ground the whole thing might go to pieces. He asked me for advice which he could forward to the President as to the best line to take.

"The President," I said, "should not attempt to dictate to Europe, but he could say: 'I came to Europe as the exponent of certain general principles which the Allies accepted as the basis of the peace and which, I am convinced, the American people as a whole accept. During the last two months I have

studied the practical application of those principles to a number of concrete problems. With the help of my expert advisers, who have been in close touch with your advisers, I now know precisely what solutions of those problems would be in accordance with my principles; and I am prepared to formulate those solutions in twenty-four hours. I cannot recommend the American people to guarantee a Peace based on any other solutions. I have no wish to force my principles upon you but I cannot ask the American people to be parties to European diplomatic arrangements contrary to the spirit in which the United States entered the war and to that in which it wishes to see Peace made. Therefore I wish to know whether you, too. are ready to agree to the solutions which I propose?'"

Auchincloss caused this advice to be conveyed to the President. I followed it up with a leading article in the Paris *Daily Mail* on March 24th of which the conclusion ran:

> Talking will not save the Peace Conference. If talking could serve, the Russian Revolution would have produced an earthly paradise. Clear thought is needed, and action waiting upon firm decision. The Conference cannot stay where it is, it must either go backwards or forwards. If it does not go forwards it will assuredly go backwards. Someone must give it a lead. If the lead be strong and clear, the Allied and Associated peoples will reckon quickly with those who lag behind.

Mr. Henry White, one of the American delegates, telephoned early on the morning of the 24th to thank me for this leading article which, he said, expressed exactly the feeling of the whole American delegation. The bulk of the British delegation agreed with it also and wished to get on with the work. But adverse influences were too strong for them. The Bolshevist revolution at Budapest and the threat of further revolutions in the Balkans caused general disquietude. The Anglo-French dispute about Syria involved as much loss of time as the Italian refusal to contemplate any Adriatic settlement that should not assign Fiume to Italy. The question of American acceptance of a mandate in Armenia was also under discussion; and Sinn Fein emissaries, some of them of

Italian origin, began to stir up the Conference on the subject of Ireland.

THE SYRIAN PROBLEM

But the two main questions at that moment concerned the left Bank of the Rhine, and Syria. On the Syrian question I had been working since November, 1918, when I had warned Lord Derby, the British Ambassador in Paris, that unless a small Anglo-French Commission were set to work upon it before the Peace Conference met, so as to hammer out some acceptable solution in advance, it might poison the whole Conference. He replied that it could not be done. Such work was too important for junior officials, and senior officials had no time for it. Subsequently the question had become envenomed by the British pan-Arab policy, of which Colonel Lawrence was the chief exponent, and by the arrival of the Emir Feisal as a delegate to the Peace Conference, accompanied by Colonel Lawrence. The French had characteristically shown their annoyance by treating Feisal with studied contempt; and, towards the end of March, Feisal made up his mind to depart. In order to avoid this breach, which would probably have led to hostilities between the Arabs and the French in Syria, I made an effort to bring the chief exponents of the British and the French views together. Colonel Lawrence, Sir Valentine Chirol, and Miss Gertrude Bell met, in my rooms, M. Robert de Caix, afterwards French Commissioner in Syria, M. Philippe Millet, foreign editor of the *Temps,* M. Henri Brenier, Director-General of the Marseilles Chamber of Commerce and an expert on Syria, M. Sabatier d'Espeyran of the French Foreign Office, and M. Auguste Gauvain, the eminent foreign editor of the *Journal des Débats.* For nearly six hours we discussed the question in all its aspects and reached so large a measure of agreement that Colonel Lawrence undertook to advise Feisal not to leave Paris, while the French undertook to get into direct touch with Feisal. In this way it was hoped to avoid the necessity of sending out a special Commission from the Conference to Syria, and to settle the question in Paris.

THE BULLITT MISSION

The American delegation promptly asked me for a memorandum on these Syrian conversations and sent it to the President, an extra copy being made for the American colonial expert, Mr. Beer. But, before matters could proceed far, a flutter was caused by the return from Moscow of Messrs. William C. Bullitt and Lincoln Steffens who had been sent to Russia towards the middle of February by Colonel House and Mr. Lansing, " for the purpose of studying conditions, political and economic, therein for the benefit of the American Commissioners plenipotentiary to negotiate peace." Mr. Philip Kerr and, presumably, Mr. Lloyd George knew and approved of this mission. Mr. Bullitt was instructed to return if possible by the time President Wilson should have come back to Paris from the United States. Potent international financial interests were at work in favour of the immediate recognition of the Bolshevists. Those influences had been largely responsible for the Anglo-American proposal in January to call Bolshevist representatives to Paris at the beginning of the Peace Conference — a proposal which had failed after having been transformed into a suggestion for a Conference with the Bolshevists at Prinkipo. The well-known American Jewish banker, Mr. Jacob Schiff, was known to be anxious to secure recognition for the Bolshevists, among whom Jewish influence was predominant; and Tchitcherin, the Bolshevist Commissary for Foreign Affairs, had revealed the meaning of the January proposal by offering extensive commercial and economic concessions in return for recognition. At a moment when the Bolshevists were doing their utmost to spread revolution throughout Europe, and when the Allies were supposed to be making peace in the name of high moral principles, a policy of recognizing them, as the price of commercial concessions, would have sufficed to wreck the whole Peace Conference and Europe with it. At the end of March, Hungary was already Bolshevist; Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and even Germany were in danger, and European feeling against the blood-stained fanatics of Russia ran extremely high.

Therefore, when it transpired that an American official, connected with the Peace Conference, had returned, after a week's visit to Moscow, with an optimistic report upon the state of Russia and with an authorized Russian proposal for the virtual recognition of the Bolshevist régime by April 10th, dismay was felt everywhere except by those who had been privy to the sending of Mr. Bullitt. Yet another complication, it was apprehended, would be added to the general muddle into which the Conference had got itself, and the chances of its succeeding at all would be seriously diminished.

On the afternoon of March 26th an American friend inadvertently gave me a notion that a revival of the Prinkipo proposal, in some form, was in the air. That evening I wrote to Northcliffe:

> The Americans are again talking of recognizing the Russian Bolshevists. If they want to destroy the whole moral basis of the Peace and of the League of Nations they have only to do so.

And, in the Paris *Daily Mail* of March 27th, I wrote strongly against any proposal to recognize

> the desperadoes whose avowed aim is to turn upside down the whole basis of Western civilization.

That day Colonel House asked me to call upon him. I found him worried both by my criticism of any recognition of the Bolshevists and by the certainty, which he had not previously realized, that if the President were to recognize the Bolshevists in return for commercial concessions his whole "idealism" would be hopelessly compromised as commercialism in disguise. I pointed out to him that not only would Wilson be utterly discredited but that the League of Nations would go by the board, because all the small peoples and many of the big peoples of Europe would be unable to resist the Bolshevism which Wilson would have accredited. I insisted that, unknown to him, the prime movers were Jacob Schiff, Warburg, and other international financiers, who wished above all to bolster up the Jewish Bolshevists in order to secure a field for German and Jewish exploitation of Russia.

Colonel House argued, however, that without relations of some kind with the Bolshevists it would be impossible to prevent the utter ruin of Russia and the starvation of thousands of the best Russians who were without food; and that, if supplies could be sent to Russia under proper control, the needy might be relieved and the Allied and Associated Governments might get trustworthy information of the true position in Russia. He asked me therefore to meet him and Auchincloss next morning to see if some sound line of policy could not be worked out. This I agreed to do; but, shortly after leaving Colonel House, information reached me that Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson would probably agree next morning to recognize the Bolshevists in accordance with Mr. Bullitt's suggestions. Feeling that there was no time to lose I wrote, forthwith, a leading article for the Paris *Daily Mail* of March 28th, called "Peace with Honour." Its principal passage ran:

The issue is whether the Allied and Associated Governments shall, directly or indirectly, accredit an evil thing known as Bolshevism. Prospects of lucrative commercial enterprise in Russia, of economic concessions and of guarantees for debts, are held out to them if they will only fall down and worship Lenin and Trotsky.

There is one man to whom such temptation cannot appeal. His name is Woodrow Wilson. Since he led his country into war against German Imperialist militarism and all the forces of international finance and unmoral commercialism that supported it, he has done more than any Allied or Associated statesman to accredit sane idealism as a positive force in the life of nations. He has stood out as the champion of small peoples and of their rights. He threw the whole strength of the American people into the struggle in support of the ideals he formulated for the world, and he promised them a peace with honour and justice. Were he to bring them a peace with commercialism, belief in the sincerity of Anglo-Saxon idealism would die the world over.

Who are the tempters that would dare whisper into the ears of the Allied and Associated Governments? They are not far removed from the men who preached peace with profitable dishonour to the British people in July, 1914. They are akin to, if not identical with, the men who sent Trotsky and some scores of associate desperadoes to ruin the Russian Revolution as a democratic, anti-German force in the spring of 1917. They are the spiritual

authors of the Prinkipo policy, and they it is who, in reality, inspired the offer of Tchitcherin, the Bolshevist Commissary for foreign affairs, to make economic and commercial concessions to the Allies in connection with the Prinkipo Conference. . . .

That intrigue failed. It may be revived. Lenin, who is a sinister fanatic, would promise any price to secure the recognition he needs in order that his agents and helpers in Allied and Associated countries may be able to raise their heads and openly to encompass the ruin of ordered democratic civilization by claiming that what Allied and Associated Governments had sanctioned in Russia is lawful and laudable elsewhere. . . .

The establishment of just conditions of peace will by itself help to counteract Bolshevism. But the essential thing is that the Allied and Associated Governments should keep their escutcheon clean and be utterly resolved to have no peace that is not a true peace with honour.

I had hardly sent this article to the printers when an American friend, Mr. Charles R. Crane, who had been dining with President Wilson, called to see me. He showed great alarm at the turn things were taking. "Bullitt is back," he said, "and the President is already talking Bullitt's language. I fear he may ruin everything. Our people at home will certainly not stand for the recognition of the Bolshevists at the bidding of Wall Street." He urged me to point out the danger clearly in the *Daily Mail*. I reassured him and told him that what I could say was already said and that he would find it in the *Daily Mail* next morning.

Before I was up next day, Colonel House telephoned to say that he wished to see me urgently. Apparently, to use an Americanism, my article "had got under the President's hide." When I reached the Crillon, House and Auchincloss looked grave. I told them that, had I waited to discuss policy with them before writing my article, the chances were that there would have been no policy to discuss because the President and, possibly, Lloyd George would have committed themselves to recognition of the Bolshevists that very morning. The Colonel begged me, however, in view of the delicacy of the situation to refrain from further comment until it could be seen how things would go; and I consented, on the understanding that nothing irrevocable would be done unless

I were informed beforehand. Then the Colonel, Auchincloss, and I went for a long drive during which we discussed a possible policy in regard to the Bolshevists. Its main lines were that relations should be established with them in order to secure protection for a kind of Hoover revictualling mission on conditions that would ensure the relief of non-Bolshevist as well as of Bolshevist Russians; that military operations supported or undertaken by the Allies against the Bolshevists should cease; that there should be no Bolshevist propaganda in Central Europe or in Allied countries; and that the question of recognition should be reserved until the Bolshevists had shown their wish and their power to maintain orderly government and to respect international engagements.

We returned to the Crillon at midday. As I passed through the secretaries' room on my way to that of Colonel House, Arthur Frazier held up his hand to stop me. He had the telephone receiver at his ear and was engaged in conversation. When it ended he said, "You have done it this time. Recognition has gone bu'st. That was Bullitt talking. He tells me that he breakfasted this morning with Lloyd George who had the *Daily Mail* before him, and that Lloyd George said it was impossible to go on with recognition while the *Daily Mail* was talking like that."

In his evidence before the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, on September 12, 1919, Mr. Bullitt gave the following account of his breakfast with Mr. Lloyd George:

The next morning [March 28] I had breakfast with Mr. Lloyd George at his apartment. General Smuts and Sir Maurice Hankey and Mr. Philip Kerr were also present, and we discussed the matter at considerable length. I brought Mr. Lloyd George the official text of the [Bolshevist] proposal, the same official one in that same envelope which I have just shown to you. He had previously read it, it having been telegraphed from Helsingfors. As he had previously read it, he merely glanced over it and said, "That is the same one I have already read," and he handed it to General Smuts, who was across the table, and said, "General, this is of the utmost importance and interest, and you ought to read it right away." General Smuts read it immediately and said he thought it should not be allowed to lapse; that it was of the utmost importance. Mr. Lloyd George,

however, said that he did not know what he could do with British public opinion. He had a copy of the *Daily Mail* in his hand, and he said, "As long as the British press is doing this kind of thing, how can you expect me to be sensible about Russia?"

Mr. Lloyd George's version of this incident was given by him in the House of Commons on April 16, 1919, little more than a fortnight after it occurred. In reply to a question from Mr. Clynes whether the Prime Minister could make any statement "on the approaches or the representations alleged to have been made to his Government by persons acting on behalf of such government as there is in Central Russia," Mr. Lloyd George said:

"No, we have had no approaches at all. Of course, there are constantly men of all nationalities coming and going from Russia who are always coming back with their own tales from Russia. But we have had nothing authentic. We have had no approaches of any sort or kind. I have only heard of reports that others have got proposals which they assume have come from authentic quarters, but these have never been put before the Peace Conference by any member of that Conference at all. Therefore, we have not considered them. I think I know what Mr. Clynes refers to. There was some suggestion that there was some young American who had come back. All that I can say about that is that it is not for me to judge the value of these communications. But if the President of the United States had attached any value to them he would have brought them before the Conference, and he certainly did not.

In his statement to the United States Committee on Foreign Relations (page 1272 of the Official Report) in September, 1919, Mr. Bullitt dealt with this answer, saying:

About a week after I had handed to Mr. Lloyd George the [Bolshevist] official proposal, with my own hands, in the presence of three other persons, he made a speech before the British Parliament, and gave the British people to understand that he knew nothing whatever about any such proposal. It was the most egregious case of misleading the public, perhaps the boldest that I have even known in my life. On the occasion of that statement of Mr. Lloyd George, I wrote to the President. I clipped his statement from a newspaper and sent it to the President; and I asked the President to inform me whether the statement of Mr. Lloyd George was true or untrue. He was unable to answer, inasmuch

as he would have had to reply on paper that Mr. Lloyd George had made an untrue statement. So flagrant was this that various members of the British Mission called on me at the Crillon a day or so later and apologized for the Prime Minister's action in the case.

It was explained to me by the members of the British Delegation who called on me, that the reason for this deception was that although, when Lloyd George got back to London, he intended to make a statement there favourable to peace with Russia, he found that Lord Northcliffe, acting through Mr. Wickham Steed, the editor of *The Times*, and Mr. Winston Churchill, British Secretary for War, had rigged the Conservative majority of the House of Commons against him, and that they were ready to slay him then and there if he attempted to speak what was his own opinion at the moment on Russian policies.

The truth is that the action I had taken against the recognition of the Bolshevists was taken publicly, ten days before there was any question of correspondence between Lord Northcliffe and members of the House of Commons; and, on Mr. Bullitt's own showing, it was my article, "Peace with Honour" in the Paris *Daily Mail* of March 28th that caused Mr. Lloyd George not to proceed with the proposal which Mr. Bullitt had brought back from Russia. With that article Lord Northcliffe had nothing whatever to do.

PRESIDENT WILSON'S DEPRESSION

Apart from the breakdown of the Bullitt proposal, President Wilson was, at that moment, extremely depressed. Auchincloss confessed to me on the evening of March 28th that "the President is about as low-spirited as a man can be." I answered that the real question was whether Wilson was a practical idealist or merely a dealer in ideals. If he were the latter, the sooner he understood that he might be hounded out of Europe by the angry peoples whom he would have deceived, the better. If he were ready, on the other hand, to stand for a sane and clean peace he would get all the support he wanted. Then Auchincloss said, "Could you not take him to-morrow on to a mountain top and show him clearly the

abyss on the one hand and the Promised Land on the other? It might save him and the situation." Therefore I wrote in the Paris *Daily Mail* of Sunday, March 30th, an article called "Pisgah and Sinai." It ran:

On the Sabbath, good folk are wont to go a Sabbath day's journey. The world is undecided whether the Conference leaders are good folk or not. Good or bad, they might do worse than betake themselves to a mountain top and view the prospect. They have the choice between Pisgah and Sinai.

Respectable as are the records and the achievements of M. Clemenceau, Mr. Lloyd George and Signor Orlando, it is not they whom the world will chiefly stone if peace tarry longer in coming or go lame on arrival. President Wilson will be at once the scapegoat and the victim.

Are his ideals really impracticable? Not if he truly believes in them and is prepared to sacrifice himself for them. Not if he be a creator of great works rather than a trafficker in great words. Not if he be a sane idealist rather than a dealer in ideals. Not if his Sabbath Day's journey be towards Sinai rather than towards Pisgah. Not if he rid himself of every thought that is not one of utter devotion to the cause he professes to serve.

An eminent prelate, who recently craved audience of President Wilson, desired to say to him one sentence: "Mr. President, be a thunderstorm of honesty!" We Europeans have a right to expect that Mr. Wilson shall be honest with himself and honest with us. We have given him enough whole-hearted allegiance to have a claim upon him. We appointed him first citizen of the world.

We care little for American politics, Republican or Democrat, worthy though those politics may be. Neither do we care, at this moment, for our own politics or for our own politicians. We care for the peace and welfare of Europe with which the peace and welfare of the world are inseparably bound up. We ask therefore that, knowing this, President Wilson should care as little as we do for his politics and our politics, his politicians and our politicians, but that he should care everything for the welfare of our people and of his.

President Wilson has seen the Promised Land. He has still a chance to enter it at the head of the Allied and Associated peoples. But he will not enter it from Mount Pisgah. The only way to it leads from Sinai.

Next day a big American colonel walked into the *Daily Mail* office and put down, with a thump, a five-hundred-franc note on a table. "I want that editorial of yours cabled right

now to the United States," he said; " and if that will pay for it, take it. If not, tell me how much more it will cost." From many quarters, including some intimate personal friends of the President, I heard that my article had bitten deep. The President declared, on the evening of March 30th, that he was determined " to pull the thing through " and that quickly. But, in the American Delegation, the fear prevailed that Lloyd George might again " pull the President off the track " — a fear not altogether unfounded — though a greater danger lay in Wilson's own fits of obstinacy. He had one such fit about the Sarre Basin and the left bank of the Rhine. The French wished to annex the Sarre Basin outright, and Lloyd George had proposed that they be given the Sarre coal mines in perpetuity but with only enough political and administrative control as to enable them to work the mines. The Americans urged, on the other hand, that this would lead to endless complications and that the Germans would create friction and " incidents " of all sorts while the French would constantly demand the extension of their administrative control in order to affirm their authority.

Colonel House therefore suggested that the French should be allowed to occupy the Sarre Basin with complete control of the mines for fifteen years as reparation for the damage done by the Germans to the coal mines in the northeast of France; and that, at the end of fifteen years, a plebiscite should be taken under the League of Nations to decide whether or not the inhabitants of the Sarre wished to revert to Germany.

CLEMENCEAU AND WILSON

I discussed this suggestion with a number of intelligent Frenchmen who thought that Clemenceau would probably accept it. On March 31st, Leo Maxse of the *National Review,* an old friend of Clemenceau, brought me a message that Clemenceau would like to see me. Maxse added that Clemenceau was full of suppressed rage against Lloyd George whom he accused of having repeatedly played him false.

I asked Maxse to tell Clemenceau that I would call upon

him next day, April 1st. In the meantime, I saw Colonel House, whom I again found extremely worried. The President, he said, was being influenced more and more by Lloyd George who was showing the *Manchester Guardian* to him and persuading him that only by a pro-Bolshevist and semi-pro-German policy could a disaster be avoided in England. When I asked House whether there were anything that could usefully be said to Clemenceau in order to clear up the position he at first said, "No"; but afterwards, added that, if I could persuade Clemenceau to come closer to the President, he, House, would do his utmost to get the President closer to Clemenceau so that contact between the two men might be reëstablished. "At present," concluded House, "your little Welshman has manœuvred the President so skilfully against Clemenceau that the two are not on speaking terms."

I saw Clemenceau at 2:15 on April 1st. He said that things were not going at all well and that the tendencies of Wilson and Lloyd George were making his position almost untenable. In some respects, Clemenceau added, Lloyd George was more favourable to France than Wilson. In regard to the Sarre coal mines, Lloyd George had proposed that they should become absolutely the property of France; but, when it came to the administrative details, Lloyd George had slipped back to the side of Wilson.

I suggested that he would do well to talk with Wilson and to find out exactly what was in his mind.

"Talk to Wilson!" exclaimed the old Tiger. "How can I talk to a fellow who thinks himself the first man for two thousand years who has known anything about peace on earth? Wilson imagines that he is a second Messiah. He believes he has been sent to give peace to the world and that his preconceived notions are the only notions worth having. I have done everything to gratify him. I receive him at the foot of the staircase as though he were the King of England; still he is not satisfied."

"It would be much better, Monsieur le Président, to shut yourself up in a room with him for two or three hours and to have it out," I said.

"No, no," returned Clemenceau. "If I were locked up with him in a room for any number of hours we should get no nearer to an understanding. He will not see that there are certain things I cannot do without enraging the whole of France. But I see that I am nearly at the point of having to hold up my hand and to say publicly, 'Je n'en peux plus!'"

"What will be the good of that?" I asked. "Some sort of peace will still have to be made and you will only have given a public exhibition to the world that the Allied leaders are unable to agree. On the whole, I believe that Wilson means well by France and that his political interest demands a reasonable application of his general ideas. I think he would be ready to agree to solutions in the Sarre Basin and on the left Bank of the Rhine that you, too, could accept"; and I proceeded to outline the kind of solution which I had more than once discussed with Colonel House.

Then Clemenceau exclaimed suddenly, "Bring me, at 2:30 to-morrow, ten lines of that sort on paper and if you can assure me that Wilson will agree to them, at least in principle, I will take them and work with Wilson."

I hurried back to the Hotel Crillon and told House, who said, "Thank goodness! You have delivered the goods. Now, take my stenographer, dictate your formulas to him, and then dictate a letter to me enclosing them. In the letter you can say that you have seen Clemenceau and that you think he would accept something like your formulas. I will either take or send your letter to the President to-night and, if he accepts them, or modifies them in any way, I will tell you to-morrow so that you can take them to Clemenceau at 2:30."

I had rarely seen the Colonel more pleased. In an hour, the formulas and the letter to him were ready. The letter ran:

I had a short conversation this afternoon with M. Clemenceau. I found him under considerable misapprehension as to what I believe to be the real attitude and intentions of President Wilson. I discussed with him various suggestions for a solution of the issue concerning the Sarre Basin and the organization of the zone protective of the eastern frontiers of France.

M. Clemenceau asked me to bring him to-morrow, Wednesday, afternoon at 2:30, a short written formula, which, as far as I could

judge, President Wilson might be inclined to accept. I therefore drafted the enclosed formula as being one which I think M. Clemenceau would be disposed to accept.

M. Clemenceau added that if such a formula could be found he, for his part, would be willing to coöperate most heartily with President Wilson in securing its acceptance by the Peace Conference.

The formulas were:

THE SARRE BASIN

The Sarre Basin shall be occupied and administered by France on a mandatory basis for a period of fifteen years.

At the end of this period the allegiance of the inhabitants shall be decided by a plebiscite organized under the authority and control of the League of Nations, the plebiscite to be taken either *en bloc* or by communes and the ultimate allegiance of the whole area or of the respective parts to be determined by the vote.

The mines shall be exploited by France during the mandatory period as partial reparation for the damage done by Germany to French coal mines. Should it appear that French coal mines have been permanently damaged or rendered entirely useless by the Germans, the coal mines of the Sarre Basin shall, at the end of the period of fifteen years, remain permanently the property of France irrespective of the result of the plebiscite.

There shall be no fortifications or military establishments in the Sarre Basin other than a police force or gendarmerie for the maintenance of public order.

Under the French administration the citizenship of the inhabitants shall be unchanged except in so far as individuals may be allowed to acquire French citizenship; their local representative assemblies, their religious institutions, language, and schools shall be maintained and the inhabitants shall be exempt from military service. They shall not be entitled to representation either in the German or French parliaments. Any who may desire to leave the district shall have full opportunity to dispose of their property on equitable terms.

PROTECTION OF EASTERN FRANCE

Upon the signature of peace, all fortified works, fortresses, and field works, situate on German territory to the west of a line drawn fifty kilometers to the east of the Rhine shall be disarmed and dismantled. No new fortification of any kind shall be constructed there, nor shall there be any armed or military organization nor any manufacture of materials of war within that zone save such as

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may be requisite under the terms of Allied occupation during the period of reparation.

Any Allied occupation that may be requisite during the period of reparation shall be undertaken by French or other Allied detachments as mandatories on behalf of the League of Nations. Officers of the Allied and Associated armies shall be attached to any forces of occupation.

Any violation of these provisions shall be a hostile act directed against the signatories of the present treaty and, in particular, any attempt on the part of Germany to evade or infringe them shall involve *ipso facto* immediate action by the League of Nations or mandatories that it may appoint *ad hoc*.

Next morning, April 2nd, I called at the Hotel Crillon to hear the result. Colonel House said wearily: "Don't ask me. Frazier will tell you about it." I went with Frazier into another room.

"He turned me out," said Frazier.

"Who?" I asked.

"The President," he answered. "I took your letter and formulas up to him last night. He had hardly glanced through them when he flew into a terrible rage. He threw them on to the table and shouted, 'I will not have it. I will not have it. Unless my principles are accepted integrally I will order the *George Washington* at once and go home. What do you mean by bringing me things which are in flagrant contradiction with my principles?' — and, literally, he turned me out of his room."

"Then Clemenceau is quite right," I replied. "Your President is an utterly impossible fellow. How do my formulas violate his principles?"

"I cannot guess, and he did not say," answered Frazier. "He explained nothing, but just bundled me out."

"Well," I returned, "I shall go to Clemenceau at 7:15 tonight — the King of the Belgians wants to see him at 2:30, so he has put off my visit till the evening — and shall tell him that I agree with him about Wilson and can have nothing more to do with the business. Also I shall now let *The Times* publish an article we have just received from Frank Simonds beginning 'The League of Nations is dead. All chances of a

real settlement of the European problems is at an end.' This article has already been cabled to the United States, and I see no reason why *The Times* should not print it."

Frazier called in Auchincloss. They were perturbed when they heard of Frank Simonds's article and begged me not to allow it to be published in London, where they thought, as I thought, that it would make a very bad impression. I agreed not to publish it in London on condition that they would send a copy of it at once to the President to soothe his nerves. But I warned them that it would already have appeared in the United States.

My visit to Clemenceau that evening was very brief. When I told him summarily what the situation was, he answered, dejectedly, "*Je vous l'ai bien dit.*" After a pause he asked, "What next?"

"The next thing, Monsieur le Président," I said, "is for you to catch hold of Wilson. I believe that Colonel House will talk squarely to him to-night; and I have taken steps to send him some soothing syrup. If you have a good pull at him, you and House may yet bring him into line."

Clemenceau said he would see what he could do. On returning home I wrote, for the *Daily Mail* of April 3rd, an article called "The Front Line" in which the Allied statesmen were warned of the consequences of pusillanimity or insubordination. It concluded:

> There have of late been signs of panic among them. There has been talk of flight. They have dallied with insubordination. They have said in effect, "If I be not allowed to fight as best pleases me, I will go home!"
>
> It is charitable to suppose that men who talk thus are losing their nerve. In this case it would be more charitable to relieve them. If they are unfit to hold the front line, let other and fitter men take their places. It is better to renew the fighting line in time than to risk disaster to the whole cause.

This article, and the representations which Colonel House made to Wilson the night before, shook things up. By the afternoon of April 3rd an improvement in the situation was reported. Wilson explained to House that any idea of giving the

French or anybody else a mandate under the League of Nations *in Europe* was contrary to his principles and that he had therefore rejected my formulas — which, by the way, had been prepared not only after discussion with Colonel House but also with an American expert, my old friend Professor Haskins of Harvard University — but that he was prepared to give the French the complete ownership of the Sarre mines as reparation. As to the left bank of the Rhine he was opposed to any permanent occupation of French or Allied troops.

These excuses struck me as rather lame, because I had not suggested any permanent occupation by French or other Allied troops but only such occupation as might be requisite during the period of reparation, the occupying forces acting as mandatories on behalf of the League of Nations. Ultimately, on April 5th, the question of the Sarre Basin was entrusted to M. Tardieu, Mr. Headlam-Morley, and Professor Haskins as French, British, and American experts, who worked out a formula not very different from that I had originally recommended, except that it gave ownership of the Sarre mines to France. It placed the government of the Sarre under the trusteeship of the League of Nations and arranged for the taking of a plebiscite after fifteen years under the auspices of the League. The main effect of Wilson's anger was thus to cause further loss of time. As I wrote to Northcliffe on the evening of April 3rd:

I have explained to Frazier and Auchincloss that the President is getting himself into a very difficult position. He is about to demand that the Monroe Doctrine should be included in the League of Nations Covenant. In other words, he is demanding a special concession to American ideas or traditions in a document framed to guarantee the peace of the world. I see no real objection to the inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine, because I do not believe that it has any practical importance beyond making it certain that, if the League of Nations has to intervene anywhere in the Western Hemisphere, the United States shall have charge of the job. This would probably happen in any case. But, if the President is working for this concession, why should he not make a countervailing concession to the effect that any infraction of the provisions for the demilitarization of the left bank of the Rhine, and of a zone on the right bank, shall *ipso facto* involve action by France, Great

Britain, and the United States. With a guarantee of that kind the French would give up many of their demands, and would also be prepared to fall in with the Sarre Basin solutions which they oppose at present because they are not certain whether their position in Europe will really be secure.

Auchincloss and Frazier promised to put this idea "up to" the President. "But," Frazier said sadly, "of course it is very difficult for us to speak frankly to the President. Even the Colonel cannot always talk to him and nobody near him dares tell him the truth."

Therefore I propose to begin to tell him the truth in public as soon as possible. Things have reached much too grave a pass for anything to be gained by reticence. Chirol called to-night to say that it was quite useless for him to stay on, as things were past praying for. He is leaving to-morrow.

Consequently, I wrote in the *Daily Mail* of April 4th the following lines:

High Olympus labours without giving birth to the smallest mouse. After many days it has solved neither the question of Danzig nor that of the Sarre Basin, nor that of providing adequate security for the Eastern frontiers of France. The Olympians who dwell upon it seem not to understand each other; and even the ideas of President Wilson, by which they are hypothetically guided, are becoming less and less comprehensible to the vulgar herd who dwell in the plains below.

Even at the risk of seeming impertinent, we venture to suggest that the time has come for President Wilson to explain exactly what his ideas and principles or, rather, their practical application to the various aspects of the peace situation, may be. The public in Allied countries has lost contact with him and with them. It hoped for open diplomacy, for open covenants openly arrived at, and it sees nought save secrecy and powerlessness to arrive at covenants secret or open.

There is a painful impression, which grows daily deeper, that the Conference is drifting — and drifting on to the rocks. The Allied peoples, whose fortunes are at stake, wish to know whether the Conference leaders really understand whither they are drifting. It will be no consolation to them if they receive laborious explanations when it is once more "too late."

On the morning of April 4th it became known that President Wilson had fallen ill. How serious his illness might be no one seemed to know. It turned out to be a severe attack of the influenza which had been raging in Paris that winter. Never-

theless, the Council of Four continued to meet in President Wilson's study, Colonel House taking the President's place and referring matters to him as they came up for decision. "But," as Mr. Ray Stannard Baker writes (vol. II, p. 45):

> Colonel House made no progress because each day when he referred the new proposals — which were never anything but the old proposals twisted about — to the sick man in the room beyond the wall, he found unbroken opposition. "No," said the President.

Mr. Baker claims that "peace could, indeed, have been speedily made by giving the French what they demanded," and he states in his notes (p. 47):

> The Colonel would make peace quickly by giving the greedy ones all they want! He sides with those who desire a swift peace on any terms; the President struggles almost alone to secure some constructive result out of the general ruin.

Evidently, neither President Wilson nor Mr. Baker ever understood what Colonel House desired or why he desired it. No man in the Peace Conference was more opposed than Colonel House to the idea of "giving the greedy ones all they wanted"; but no man knew better that mere obstinacy in defending abstract ideas, without considering where compromise was practically expedient and harmless, could only end by bringing Wilson into collision with facts, and by discrediting him while spoiling the peace.

One of the first effects of Wilson's illness was to bring about a rapid change of front on the part of Mr. Lloyd George. On the morning of April 4th he suddenly invited three of his chief critics in the French press to luncheon — M. Jean Herbette of the *Temps*, M. André Géraud of the *Echo de Paris*, and M. André Chéradame. To them he talked as though he, rather than President Wilson, were the apostle of great principles. He assured them that he would never sign any peace unless it were fully compatible with his War Aims speech of January 5, 1918 — a speech which, as he had explained to me at the time, was largely a tactical utterance. One reason for his efforts to influence the French press was his alarm at the impression created by an interview which "a high British

authority" (none other than Mr. Lloyd George himself) had given to the Paris correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette*, Mr. Sisley Huddleston. This interview, published on March 31st, accentuated the impression in British Parliamentary circles that Lloyd George was "going soft." It had, indeed, been given at the moment when Lloyd George was working for the recognition of the Bolshevists, and when he was also engaged in a secret controversy with M. Clemenceau, to whom he had written a long memorandum on March 26th, and from whom he had received a damaging reply on March 28th.

This controversy turned, in reality, upon the "possession is nine tenths of the law" conception of the peace which Mr. Lloyd George had expounded to me and Chalmers Mitchell in October, 1918. M. Clemenceau countered Mr. Lloyd George's plea for considerate treatment of Germany in Europe by pointing out that this method had not been followed in dealing with German interests outside Europe. Whereas France would be left without definite guarantees of her security, "a certain number of total and definite guarantees will have been acquired by maritime nations that have not known an invasion." The surrender of the German colonies would be total and final. The surrender of the Germany Navy would be total and final. The surrender of a large part of the German Mercantile Marine would be total and final. The exclusion of Germany from foreign markets would be total and would last for some time. "On the other hand," added M. Clemenceau's reply, "partial and temporary solutions would be reserved for Continental countries, that is to say those which have suffered most from the war."

But the British Prime Minister never took Martin Luther's exclamation "So help me God, I can do no other," as his motto. On March 31st, three days after receiving Clemenceau's reply, Mr. Lloyd George and General Smuts included Allied pension charges in the total of reparations payments to be demanded from Germany; and President Wilson gave way to them. As Mr. Ray Stannard Baker writes (vol. II, p. 47):

> Lloyd George seemed to have no guiding principles whatever. He was powerful on one side one day and powerful on the other

the next. He was personally one of the most charming, amiable, engaging figures at Paris, full of Celtic quicksilver, a torrential talker in the Conference, but no one was ever quite sure, having heard him express an unalterable determination on one day, that he would not be unalterably determined some other way on the day following.

The fact was, unfortunately, that if Mr. Lloyd George felt he was losing ground at home, or that a by-election had gone against him, he would face right about in the twinkling of an eye; and if public pressure were put upon him to maintain some consistency he yielded to it for the moment — but for the moment only.

On April 7th, before President Wilson had recovered, it was announced that the *George Washington* had been ordered to sail at once from New York to Brest in readiness to take the President home for good. At the same time, the Italians were threatening to withdraw from the Conference if their claims in regard to the Adriatic settlement were not admitted. Frazier, on behalf of Colonel House, asked me what I thought about these threats. I told him that if France, England, and the United States stood together, an Italian withdrawal would hurt nobody but the Italians; and that while an American withdrawal would be a much more serious matter, even it would not render the European position hopeless. The French and British armies could deal with Germany very promptly; and, by a great financial effort in England and France, the financial crisis might be overcome. There could be no question of letting things collapse merely because the United States had thrown up the sponge.

While I was talking with Frazier, Colonel House appeared. When I congratulated him upon his efforts to push things forward in the Council of Four, he said: "It has been a terrible job, but this morning I thought we were really 'over the top.' To-night I am less confident, but I hope that things may still be made to go. If I could only tell you the kind of trouble I have had with those three other fellows you would be astonished and disgusted."

I learned afterwards that he had just walked out of the

Council of Four after having been exasperated by M. Klotz, the French Minister of Finance, whom Clemenceau had allowed to obstruct the formal adoption of points already agreed upon until everybody had lost patience. Lloyd George, for once, had been comparatively consistent and firm — possibly because Bonar Law had come over from London to tell him that the House of Commons was seriously disquieted by his changes of attitude. Consequently, Lloyd George abandoned the idea of protesting in a great speech to the British newspaper correspondents at the Hotel Majestic against press criticisms of his behaviour. But, on April 8th, he received a telegram, signed by more than three hundred and seventy members of Parliament, asking for assurances that he would fulfil his election pledges. This telegram, and the resounding defeat of the Government candidate in a by-election at Hull on April 11th, upset him so completely that he resolved to go to London and to deliver the great speech in the House of Commons.

"GRASSHOPPERS"

Of the inner history of the telegram from the three hundred and seventy members of Parliament I know little. Mr. Lloyd George believed that it had been inspired by Northcliffe, who had left the south of France on the approach of spring and had fixed himself at Fontainebleau. As far as I could ascertain, a number of members of Parliament, including Lord Northcliffe's former associate, the late Mr. Kennedy Jones, had written, or telegraphed, to ask Northcliffe for his view of the situation. Northcliffe's knowledge of the situation was derived mainly from my memoranda. In the south of France and at Fontainebleau he had received a few visits from British and American public men, but he was still suffering too acutely from the growth in his throat to be able to follow political affairs for himself. He seems, therefore, to have advised Mr. Kennedy Jones by telegram that as many members of Parliament as possible should sign a telegram to the Prime Minister asking for an assurance that his election pledges — in which he had declared that Germany would be made to pay repara-

tions up to her full capacity and that the Allies would "search her pockets"—would be maintained. As all incoming and outgoing foreign telegrams were still subject to scrutiny by the British and French authorities, Lloyd George doubtless saw Northcliffe's telegram to Kennedy Jones; and, as he probably imagined that Northcliffe had inspired my articles in the Paris *Daily Mail* and despatches to *The Times*, whereas the truth was rather that my memoranda to Northcliffe, and especially the *Westminster Gazette* interview, had made Northcliffe anxious, Lloyd George seems to have thought that, if he were to trounce Northcliffe publicly, I should speedily be silenced.

In point of fact, Northcliffe did not inspire, or seek to inspire, a single line that I wrote during the Peace Conference. Still less did he give me "instructions." He depended upon me for information, not I upon him. He constantly expressed agreement with what I wrote, but in no case did he suggest that I should write otherwise. When, however, he heard that Lloyd George was going to London, he suggested that I should go also, since nobody in London was aware of what had been going on in Paris. Thus I was present in the House of Commons on April 16th when Lloyd George delivered the famous speech in which he denounced Northcliffe. In it he treated his own statement to the Paris correspondent of the *Westminster Gazette*, which Mr. Kennedy Jones described as the source of the information upon which the telegram of the three hundred and seventy members to Lloyd George had been sent, as "an anonymous article," and referred to Northcliffe as "here to-day, jumping there to-morrow and there the next day. I would as soon rely on a grasshopper." He suggested further that Northcliffe had been "unnerved and upset" by disappointment because the war had been "won without him"; but that Northcliffe had believed himself to be, at any rate, the only man to make peace. Alluding to the Peace Propaganda Programme drawn up at Crewe House by the Inter-Departmental Committee in October, 1918, Lloyd George continued:

So he [Northcliffe] publishes the peace terms and he waits for the call. It does not come. He retreats to sunny climes, waiting, but not a sound reaches that far distant shore to call him back to his great task of saving the world. What can you expect? He comes back and he says, "Well, I cannot see the disaster, but I am sure it is there. It is bound to come." Under these conditions I am prepared to make allowances; but let me say this, that when that kind of disease of vanity is carried to the point of sowing dissension between great Allies, whose unity is essential to the peace and happiness of the world, and when an attempt is made to make France distrust Britain, to make France hate America, and America to dislike France, and Italy to quarrel with everybody, then I say that not even that kind of disease is a justification for so black a crime against humanity.

The House of Commons roared with delight at the Prime Minister's performance. It showed no critical faculty whatever. In view of the gravity of the position in Paris, the spectacle was hardly comforting. But then, Bottomley had been returned to that Parliament by a majority of 10,000 while Mr. Asquith had been rejected by a majority of 2,000.

PARIS AGAIN

I returned to Paris on April 23rd to pick up the threads of the work which had been interrupted by my excursion to London. Several important questions had then been on the point of settlement. Among them was the Japanese demand for the inclusion in the Covenant of the League of Nations of a clause providing for "just treatment" of each other's nationals by members of the League. In agreement with some members of the American Delegation [but not with Colonel House] Mr. W. M. Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia had opposed this demand vehemently; and though I had brought some prominent Australians into direct contact with Viscount Makino, the second Japanese delegate, in the hope of promoting a friendly compromise, the Japanese had been persuaded, against their will, to withdraw their clause on the night of April 12th when the amended Covenant of the League of Nations was definitely adopted. Had the question come to

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a vote, there would have been a majority in favour of the clause; but Mr. Hughes threatened to start an anti-Japanese agitation in Australia if the Japanese should insist. Consequently, Sir Robert Borden, General Smuts, and Mr. Massey, the Canadian, South African, and New Zealand Delegates, who did not entirely approve of their Australian colleague's attitude, joined the Americans in urging the Japanese to drop the clause and to content themselves with a general statement by President Wilson as Chairman of the League of Nations Commission. The Japanese were very sore, and their soreness was not assuaged by the reflection that their tactics had not been altogether skilful. Had they been prepared, at the outset, to state the principle for which they were contending in the preamble to the Covenant, instead of seeking to embody it as a clause in the Covenant itself, there would have been little difficulty. But when they had aroused opposition by the original wording of their clause and had afterwards given ground by agreeing that it should be whittled down and put into the preamble, they found that opposition increased instead of diminishing, and they had to yield still further.

Another question was that of Syria. Lloyd George and Clemenceau were still at loggerheads about it, and Colonel Lawrence was not helpful. The French Foreign Office, on the other hand, was pertinaciously obstructive. On April 10th I had suggested to Clemenceau that the negotiations about Syria should be taken out of the hands of the French Foreign Office and entrusted to MM. Robert de Caix and Henri Brenier, both of whom knew the question and spoke English. Clemenceau asked me to see the Foreign Minister, M. Pichon, at once and to persuade him to arrange matters as I suggested. Pichon agreed, and promised to let de Caix and Brenier have charge of negotiations. Nevertheless, matters dragged; and, at the end of April, de Caix asked me to see Clemenceau once again and to urge upon him the importance of haste. Lloyd George, he reported, had promised Clemenceau to tell the Emir Feisal that, in future, he must agree with France, who would pay him his subsidy; but, apparently, Lloyd George had done nothing of the kind. Meanwhile, a proposal had taken shape

for the despatch to Syria of an international Commission of Enquiry.

When I saw Clemenceau on April 27th he asked me to do what I could to get the Syrian business put on to a satisfactory basis before any international Commission of Enquiry should start. Therefore I saw the American experts, who were quite prepared to recommend that the question be settled in Paris if Colonel House would agree to the line of policy they proposed. The Colonel advised me strongly not to begin, as I suggested, by arranging a meeting between the various experts and prospective members of the Commission of Enquiry, but to return first of all to Clemenceau and advise Clemenceau to put on to paper, in the form of a memorandum, the various assurances he had received from Lloyd George and to get Lloyd George to initial it. Then, House added, there would be a positive basis for discussion. America would certainly accede to any fair agreement that France and England might make.

I saw Clemenceau again on May 4th. He welcomed House's advice and asked me to tell de Caix and M. Maurice Long (the two French Commissioners-Designate for Syria) to draw up without delay the memorandum for Lloyd George. Clemenceau complained bitterly that Lloyd George had continually failed to keep his word to him. He added:

> At first Lloyd George expressed himself entirely in favour of a French mandate for Syria and said that the only obstacle was Wilson. "Agree with Wilson," he added, "and I will help you in every way, provided that you do not want to conquer Syria, that you give up your claims to Cilicia, and that you leave Mosul in the British sphere." All this I have done [Clemenceau continued]; but after I had agreed with Wilson and House, Lloyd George did nothing; and he has now allowed Allenby to send away to Cilicia the regiment of cavalry which the British had asked me to send to Beirut. I really cannot stand this sort of slap in the face. All we now want is that the British should agree with us and that instructions should be given to the local British officers not to stir up the population against us. Lloyd George has told me that he intends to demand a mandate for Great Britain in Palestine and Mesopotamia. I really cannot see why he should allow his people to contest our mandate for Syria.

Robert de Caix and Maurice Long got to work at once and prepared their memorandum. But, for some inexplicable reason, probably obstruction on the part of the French Foreign Office, it was not sent to Mr. Lloyd George. On May 10th, de Caix called upon me and said, "You will have to stir up the Tiger once again. Our memorandum has been pigeonholed somewhere and we cannot budge." Next day Clemenceau himself sent for me; and when I asked him what had happened to the de Caix memorandum, he replied that he was much bothered with other matters and did not wish to raise another thorny question with Lloyd George at that juncture. He asked me whether I could not get the British to agree to a French mandate for Syria and to the substitution of French for British garrisons there, with the goodwill and assistance of the British authorities. But I told him that these matters could very well have been settled between him and Mr. Lloyd George if the de Caix memorandum had gone forward; and that until something definite were done on the French side it would be hard for any intermediary to make much progress. Nevertheless, I did what I could and, on May 16th, I had the satisfaction of learning that the Syrian question was making good progress and that the substitution of French garrisons for British in the French zone was being arranged between the British and French Chiefs of General Staff. My last talk with Clemenceau gave me, however, the impression that he was not quite master of the situation. For the first time since I had known him, he had failed to take a strong and definite line.

THE ADRIATIC QUESTION

But of all the thorny questions before the Conference, that of the Adriatic settlement between the Italians and the Yugoslavs still remained the most intractable. On April 12th, the difficulties of the Sarre Basin and of the left bank of the Rhine had been practically eliminated by a compromise not very different in spirit from the formula I had suggested. Mr. Lloyd George was fully informed of the proposed compromise

before leaving for London; and though it was not definitely arranged between Clemenceau and Wilson until April 16th, Lloyd George agreed to it immediately after his return. Any suggestion that it was made behind his back during his visit to London for the purpose of dealing with the "Northcliffe telegram" is therefore misleading. The real bargain between Wilson and Clemenceau seems to have turned upon the inclusion of the Monroe Doctrine amendment in the Covenant of the League of Nations — to which Clemenceau assented — and the provision that the Rhine bridgeheads of Cologne, Coblentz, and Mainz should be occupied for five, ten, and fifteen years respectively, and should be evacuated in accordance with German payments of reparations. When I saw Clemenceau on April 27th he inveighed against the Foch scheme as tantamount to a French annexation of the left bank of the Rhine, which, if carried out, would certainly bring on another war. Wilson's attitude, on the other hand, had certainly been affected by the unfavorable reception in America of his threat to abandon the Conference and to sail for the United States on the *George Washington;* and, as Mr. Ray Stannard Baker has observed, fear of Bolshevism was also strong upon him. Mr. Baker writes (vol. II, pp. 64, 65):

> When it came to the crisis, then, the need to hold the world steady, keep order and fight both extremes — militarism on the one hand and Bolshevism on the other — the responsibility of breaking up the Conference became too great. Accommodation became imperative. . . . He [Wilson] had long since settled down to the conviction that. . . . this League [of Nations] was the "key to the peace," transcending the terms in importance and offering a means of correcting them after men's passions had cooled down. The League was to be a permanent institution, the terms [of peace] only temporary.

Wilson's chief failing as a practical statesman was his inability to perceive that a firm stand made at the right moment may obviate the necessity of subsequent compromise. The history of his handling of the Adriatic question is a standing illustration of this failing. When he omitted, at the beginning of the Conference, to make plain, once and for all, his

determination not to recognize the Secret Treaties or to assent to any peace based upon them, he threw away, in reality, his greatest advantage. This I had felt throughout the Conference; and on April 24th, when I resumed in Paris the negotiations between the Italians and the Southern Slavs, over which I had been asked to preside on April 12th before leaving for London, I found that President Wilson was about to take action that might jeopardize the whole situation. On April 8th I had been asked by the American experts to write a short memorandum for the guidance of the President in the settlement of the Adriatic question. In it I urged that he should not attempt to dictate terms, but that he should simply put forward the recommendations of his own — very conscientious and competent — experts who were in agreement with the British experts upon the proper solution, and that he should then say that this was the only settlement he could recommend to the American people.

I had been in close touch with the American and British experts throughout. None of them had studied the question more profoundly or fairly than Major Douglas Johnson of the American delegation. While the President was returning from the United States in March, I had been consulted upon a wireless message in which the American delegation reported to him a scene with the Italians which had occurred on March 11th in the Council of Ten. On that day, Clemenceau had read to the Council a letter from Pashitch asking that, whenever the Italo-Yugoslav question should be discussed, the Yugoslav Delegation should be allowed to be present. Sonnino had objected, saying that, while he was willing that there should be a statement of the Yugoslav case, the Yugoslavs should be excluded as soon as the Council began to discuss it. Lloyd George had then read the Rules of Procedure according to which the representatives of all the small nations were entitled to be present whenever questions affecting their interests were discussed. Thereupon Orlando had denounced the Croats and Slovenes as enemies who had no more right than the Germans to be admitted. Lansing, the American Secretary of State, had answered quietly, "The United States has recog-

nized the Southern Slav State. It must insist that the Southern Slav delegates be allowed to put forward their view. Afterwards, if there is to be any exclusion while the question is discussed, the United States will be obliged to insist that both parties to the dispute, Italians and Yugoslavs, be excluded so that the Council may sit as an impartial judge upon the whole matter." At this, Sonnino and Orlando snorted in unison and demanded an adjournment.

This incident was reported to President Wilson by wireless, but no trace of it remained in the minutes of the Council of Ten because of an arrangement by which the secretaries of the five principal delegations met after each sitting and revised the minutes in a euphonious sense. Thus, the minutes were often a record of harmony that had not existed. On March 13th the Italians saluted the return of President Wilson by publishing a memorandum of their claims based on the Secret Treaty of London "in full conformity with the principles of President Wilson." Their audacity angered Wilson. On March 15th, they followed up this manifestation by sending to Colonel House, apparently upon the advice of Clemenceau, a memorandum demanding Fiume and the greater part of Dalmatia — a document which the Americans dismissed as absurd. Towards the beginning of April, reports from American officers upon the high-handed behaviour of the Italians in Dalmatia increased American irritation; and by April 12th a hint that Wilson would insist upon Fiume being made a free port under the League of Nations caused a minor panic among the Italians. That evening, two Italians came to me with a semi-official request from Orlando that I would act as umpire between them and two Yugoslav nominees; but as I was leaving for London next morning I told them to work out a basis of agreement during my absence and that I would do all I could to help them on my return if there had been no settlement in the meantime. I declined, however, to accept any semi-official mandate from Orlando.

When I returned from London on the evening of April 22nd, the Italians came again with maps and documents. They had worked out, with some Southern Slavs, a provisional economic

agreement in the Adriatic, and said that they were now authorized by Orlando to study the political question as well. A settlement was urgent, and unless it were made within twenty-four hours it might be too late. We worked until long after midnight and made an appointment for next day, April 23rd when, however, I heard from the Americans that Orlando intended to leave Paris for Rome that night and, on his arrival there, to proclaim the annexation of Fiume to Italy. The information had been given to the Americans by one of Orlando's agents.

Half an hour later, President Wilson published his famous Declaration upon the Adriatic question. It was a lengthy document declaring that the interests of smaller States must be as scrupulously safeguarded as the interests of the most powerful States and that the principles of the Armistice must be applied to any Adriatic settlement. Consequently, Fiume could not be assigned to Italy. It abounded in protestations of American friendship for Italy, but insisted that the people of Italy could not ask America to make peace save on the principles for which America had fought.

I had hardly read the text of this Declaration when the Italian representatives sent to say that they had now received official credentials from Orlando and were ready to meet any two Southern Slavs under my chairmanship, and to refer any points upon which they might not be able to agree to the official decision of Colonel House. I answered that, in view of President Wilson's Declaration, I must think things over. Colonel House, whom I informed, thought it would be best to wait a bit and see how the President's Declaration — about the publication of which I had misgivings — would work.

Had the Declaration been allowed to reach the Italian people immediately it might have had a sobering effect. But Orlando forbade its publication in Italy until he had written an indignant reply to it which was published in large type by the Italian press alongside of Wilson's Declaration which was published in small type. In his reply, which was tantamount to a rejection of Wilson's ideas and contained a demand for Fiume, Orlando mentioned a memorandum written by Mr.

Balfour explaining British and French views upon the Adriatic settlement. This extremely able paper Orlando had been authorized to publish in full but had carefully refrained from doing so. The result of his manœuvres was to cause an outbreak of delirious indignation in Italy against Wilson and to stimulate the Nationalist demand for Fiume. The American Embassy at Rome had to be guarded by troops, and American officers in Italy were ordered to show themselves as little as possible. Orlando left immediately for Rome where he was enthusiastically received; and shortly afterwards Sonnino also left Paris.

THE COUNCIL OF THREE

The Council of Four was thus reduced to a Council of Three. In the meantime, fresh trouble arose between the Chinese, the Japanese and the Americans over the Shantung question, and further contestations between the Belgians and the Allies over the question of Belgian priority in regard to reparation payments, and the Belgian claims to Dutch Limburg. Between Clemenceau and Lloyd George there was also a scene in the Council of Three, Clemenceau accusing Lloyd George so flatly of repeated inaccuracy of statement that Lloyd George rose, seized him by the collar and demanded an apology. After Wilson had separated them, Clemenceau offered Lloyd George reparation with pistols or swords — as soon as he should have acquired a domicile in Paris — and, in the meantime. refused to apologize.

Despite these amenities, the work proceeded somehow, and, on May 3rd, Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George decided in principle that if the Italians continued to absent themselves from the Peace Conference, the other Allies and the United States would present the terms of peace to the Germans without them. They held that such a course would not involve a breach of the London Declaration of September 5, 1914 (to which Italy subsequently adhered), binding the Allies not to conclude a separate peace, inasmuch as the Italians had themselves violated the spirit of the Declaration by absenting themselves from the Peace Conference. On May 4th,

however, Sonnino telegraphed to Clemenceau from Rome accusing France and Great Britain of having violated the London Declaration. A stinging reply was drafted by M. Tardieu; but, before it could be sent, the Italians announced that they intended to return to the Conference. They had apparently received information that some French public men, including M. Poincaré, the President of the Republic, would support their demands; and, doubtless, Sonnino remembered a phrase of Goethe's which he had always been fond of quoting, "*Die Gegenwart ist eine mächtige Göttin*" — a German variation of the French proverb, "*Les absents ont toujours tort.*" They may also have heard that the Supreme Economic Council had decided to withhold, until further notice, all supplies to Italy, and that President Wilson had likewise refused to sanction a fifty-million-dollar loan for which the Italians had been pressing.

In the meantime, the Southern Slavs made a move. On May 4th Trumbitch came to tell me that he would bring, next day, a Southern Slav scheme for an Adriatic settlement which he hoped I would communicate "on my own initiative" to the Americans. I told him that the American experts were preparing a final draft settlement of their own which I thought excellent. When the Italian delegates returned to Paris they also came with proposals that, if Italy were given possession of the municipal territory of Fiume, she would lease it to the Yugoslavs for ninety-nine years. I submitted this suggestion to the American experts who would go no further than to agree to put Fiume under the League of Nations for a term of years and to take a plebiscite at the end of the term. Trumbitch accepted this proposal and offered, besides, complete disarmament of the Dalmatian coast and the islands, whereas Italy might fortify, if she wished, any of the outer Dalmatian islands that might be assigned to her.

On these lines, however, no progress could be made, and on May 10th the Italian experts once more appealed to me to preside over Italo-Yugoslav negotiations, though the Italian press was denouncing me as a ferocious enemy of Italy, an "international filibuster" and "a notorious agent of Jacob

Schiff." For some days the negotiations continued. The Italians sought to add gravity to them by conveying "confidential" information to Colonel House that, unless the solution of the Adriatic question were such as Sonnino could accept, Sonnino would commit suicide. I was solemnly consulted about this "possibility" and said that I thought it highly improbable and that, even in the case of Sonnino, there would be a margin between a threat and its execution.

At this moment, President Wilson was absolutely firm in his insistence upon the American expert proposals for the Adriatic settlement. He refused to see either the Italians or the Yugoslavs; and he certainly agreed with, if he did not actually initiate, a kind of counter-offensive on the part of the "Big Three" against the perpetual Italian attempts to blackmail him. While the Italian delegation was still "on strike," Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Wilson had agreed that the signatures of any three of the Great Powers would suffice to render the Peace Treaty valid. They did not invite the Italians to join in the Anglo-American guarantee to France against any future German aggression, and thus excluded Italy from what the Italian press had begun to call "the new Triple Alliance." Then the Supreme Economic Council had suspended the revictualling arrangements, and Wilson had held up the American loan to Italy. Finally, the Supreme Economic Council decided to put all the enemy Adriatic shipping into the Allied shipping pool and to reduce the Italian share of it to the percentage which Italy would be entitled to claim for the losses of her mercantile marine. All this was done very quietly until Italy began to realize that blackmailing tactics may be very pleasant when they are employed by one side only. I thought them injudicious; and wrote, on May 14th, in my memorandum to Northcliffe:

Frankly, I do not think that these tactics are altogether wise. If they had been accompanied or preceded by a positive policy in regard to Italy, and not merely a negative policy based at once on unwillingness to go beyond the Treaty of London, and on unwillingness to tell the Italians flatly that its execution would be diametrically opposed to the best interests of Italy, there might have been something to say for cumulative tactical pressure. In dealing with Italy,

one has not only to think of what she ought not to have but to think also of what she ought to have. That the Allies and the United States have never yet done. Consequently, the Italian Government may be able to denounce to their people the tactics of England, France, and the United States as definitely anti-Italian — unless at the eleventh hour some positive settlement is found.

While I was writing this memorandum, Colonel House telephoned to ask me to send Trumbitch to him. Orlando, he said, had just called upon him with some new suggestion. Trumbitch went to House and, as a result of his visit, asked me to persuade the Italian Economic experts to revive the provisional Italo-Yugoslav agreement about the allotment of enemy shipping in the Adriatic so that Italians and Yugoslavs might support it in a joint appeal to the Supreme Economic Council. House, for his part, had promised Trumbitch to support the appeal if it were made jointly. Consequently, I got the Italians and Yugoslavs together again and shepherded them into the Hotel Crillon where they were handed over to the American experts. At the same time Colonel House told me that Orlando would be ready to make an agreement with the Southern Slavs along the whole line within twenty-four hours and to accept him as intermediary provided that Trumbitch would also accept. House therefore wished me to secure from Trumbitch a written declaration that the Southern Slav delegation would be ready to negotiate a settlement with the Italians and to accept House as intermediary.

When I made this suggestion to Trumbitch I found him and the other Yugoslavs in a recalcitrant mood. The Austrian delegation had been summoned to Saint-Germain for the negotiation of peace, and a marked disposition to be very tender towards Austria had become noticeable among the "Big Three." The Southern Slavs began to fear that, while the Italians were driving a hard bargain with them in the Adriatic, the other Allies would support the Austrians in driving a hard bargain with them in the delimitation of the Slovene frontier in Carinthia. Consequently, Trumbitch declined to make offhand the declaration which House wanted and insisted that, even should he be forced on the morrow to negotiate with the

Italians, he must be assured of fair terms from the Allies in Carinthia. Colonel House thought that there was some justification for this demand and asked me to hammer out that night a compromise line between the Austrian and the Southern Slav claims in Carinthia. Next day, House took matters into his own hands and summoned Orlando and Trumbitch to the Hotel Crillon where, for four hours, a conference went on in watertight compartments. Trumbitch, tied down by definite instructions from his delegation, sat in one room; Orlando and an Italian diplomatist sat in another, while Colonel House, Frazier, and Major Douglas Johnson acted as intermediaries between them. The result was a total deadlock, although Orlando pressed for a final solution before midnight with an insistence which the Americans could not understand. I discovered, however, that Orlando was fearful lest his rival, Signor Nitti, should turn Italian public opinion against him, and wished to save himself by announcing an Adriatic settlement. Orlando had actually sent his own Under-Secretary of State to Italy with instructions to await at Turin a telegram saying whether "the negotiations with Steed" had gone well or ill. In the former case, the Under-Secretary had orders to arrange for the immediate release of the Southern Slav prisoners of war in Italy and for the repatriation of the Southern Slav civilians whom the Italians had deported by hundreds from Dalmatia and Istria. In the latter case the Southern Slav prisoners were to remain in durance.

Unluckily, no agreement could be reached and the Adriatic dispute was destined to run its weary and dangerous course for another four and a half years. This is not the place to record its vicissitudes. Though the fault lay principally with the Italians, the Southern Slavs, and especially Pashitch, were also blameworthy. Even on May 19, 1919, when Clemenceau wished to promote a final agreement on the more difficult territorial points, Pashitch interjected in his bad French, "*Moosoo le Preysidong, que ferez vous de la Boulgarie?*"; whereupon Clemenceau threw up his arms, told them they were impossible fellows, and proposed to turn them

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out. Early on the same day, Senator Marconi came to tell me that Orlando wished to see me at once, since he had a suggestion to make that would be acceptable to all parties. I answered by quoting an Italian proverb to the effect that a man who is "three times good" is a fool. I had been "good" to Orlando twice, and twice he had betrayed me; and I was not such a fool as to give him a third chance. But, as Marconi insisted, I said I would only meet Orlando on neutral ground in the presence of a witness, and that Marconi might, if he wished, choose the ground and be the witness. To my astonishment, he telephoned an hour later to say that Orlando accepted these conditions and would meet me that evening in Marconi's rooms. But, that afternoon, Orlando went to bed with an attack of fever; and, as I was leaving Paris next day, I met him no more.

THE GERMAN DELEGATION

While these things were going on in the background, the foreground of the Conference had been filled by the arrival of the German Peace delegates at Versailles to receive communication of the Peace terms. Not without malice, the French quartered them in the Hôtel des Réservoirs, where Bismarck had made his headquarters during the peace negotiations with the French in 1871. The German delegation, with Count Brockdorff-Rantzau at its head and its large retinue of experts, translators, and secretaries of both sexes, was carefully guarded by the police in order to save its members from insult or attack. Some of them complained bitterly of the restrictions upon their freedom which these measures involved. They seem to have thought that they would have been able to move about in Versailles and in Paris at their own sweet will, for they had no notion of the bitterness of French feeling towards them. When, at length, the Treaty was presented to them, they translated it into German with remarkable method and speed and despatched it to Berlin. This done they, with the exception of Brockdorff-Rantzau, indulged in so gross an orgy that, when the French police visited the

Hotel next day, they found it in a condition of indescribable filth and the delegates, secretaries, and translators lying drunk, in all stages of dress and undress, in the rooms and even on the stairs of the Hotel. Psychologically, their conduct may be explicable; politically, it was a blunder. A detailed report was made by the police to Clemenceau who sent it to President Wilson. It did not tend to soften the tone of the reply that the President himself wrote to the memorandum in which Brockdorff-Rantzau had taken exception to the Treaty. President Wilson, in fact, stood by the Treaty almost as firmly as Clemenceau and showed no signs of the panic which Mr. Lloyd George developed, under pressure of British criticism of the Treaty, in the latter part of May and the beginning of June. Fear that the Germans would not sign it, and that their rejection of it might expose him and his part in it to criticism, put him, as President Wilson repeatedly said, and as Mr. Ray Stannard Baker has truthfully reported, into " a perfect funk." Ultimately he returned to London and recommended the Treaty to Parliament in an eloquent speech as " stern but just."

Of the principal statesmen engaged in the making of the Treaty, the British Prime Minister was the least fitted, by temperament and knowledge, to help in building up an enduring work. He had been, in many respects, a great war leader; but, as a maker of peace, his very agility and his skill as a tactician were sore disadvantages. I doubt whether any one of the leading Peace delegates was actually satisfied with the Peace Treaty. Even Clemenceau understood its defects but trusted that time would help to remedy them. President Wilson, and to a still greater degree, Colonel House, felt that the best features of the Treaty were those which would permit of its gradual modification, through the instrumentality of the Reparation Commission and the League of Nations, when the passions and appetites that prevailed in Paris should have cooled down. My own feeling, which had been expressed, as early as April 30th, in a leading article of the Paris *Daily Mail*, was that only in and through the League of Nations could the Peace be made real, and that to this end public

opinion in Allied countries should be informed and mobilized without delay by believers in the League. I pointed out that the task of leaguing the nations might take years and that it would have to be done less by governments than by the nations themselves, whom associations of earnest men and women would have to instruct. The article concluded:

Of the four leaders of the Conference, President Wilson alone really believed in the idea of a League, but his own conception of it was originally hazy. M. Clemenceau thought it a pious aspiration that might do no harm, if it could do no good, and that might, at any rate, serve as a foil for measures of greater immediate value to France. Mr. Lloyd George held it of so little account that he discountenanced all serious attempts to organize British public support of it. Signor Orlando spoke of it in a voice tremulous with emotion and acted — as he has acted. Others, like M. Venizelos, Colonel House, and Lord Robert Cecil, believed in it, saw what it might be, and worked for it. They may one day have their reward.

Among the opponents of the League the view has been spread that it is, in substance, an Anglo-Saxon contrivance to keep the control of the world in American and British hands. There is enough plausibility in this view to render it insidiously false. At a pinch, the United States could probably dispense with the League of Nations more readily than any Great Power. The British Commonwealth which is, in substance, a League of Nations by itself, could probably toddle along for a generation or two without the assurance of foreign support in any just quarrel — and its very constitution is a guarantee against its being engaged in an unjust quarrel. France, who is peculiarly exposed to attack may, on reflection, find stronger practical reason to support and to help in perfecting a League of Nations than many of her present Allies and Associates.

But comparisons of interest, always odious in matters that depend for success upon sincerity of ideal aspiration, are peculiarly obnoxious in regard to the League of Nations. The truth is that the United States, the British Commonwealth, and France have it in their power to make or to mar the embryonic Covenant that has been adopted. Without them, it would indeed be a scrap of paper. With them, if their peoples work for it and support it wholeheartedly and unselfishly, thinking more of their duties towards the small nations than of their own power and privileges — it may be made a real, vital thing.

Presently, when peace has been signed and statesmen have no need to wrangle, in the morning, over the special claims of their respective countries, as a preparation for considering, in the evening, the common interests and needs of humanity — another Conference

may assemble, composed of men and women whose instructions will have been drawn up under the influence of enlightened public opinion, for the purpose of perfecting the imperfect work of the Conference of Peace. For that Assembly the preparatory work of educative propaganda should begin before the ink is dry upon the Peace Treaty.

Hoping that, to this end, *The Times* might help to promote and maintain coöperation between the British Commonwealth, the United States and France, I returned, after a short holiday, to London early in June to begin my active editorship of the leading British journal.

CHAPTER XIX

THE POWER OF "THE TIMES"

1919-1922

HAD I not believed that something could be done through *The Times*, with the support of the other newspapers which Lord Northcliffe controlled, to improve the situation created by the Peace Treaty, I should have begun my new work in London with a heavy heart. Northcliffe himself was very ill. He had postponed an urgent operation on his throat until I should be able to return, and I had left Paris before the signing of the Peace in order to see him before it took place. He faced it pluckily. He knew that it might be fatal or that, should he recover from it, it might seriously impair his powers. But he took the risk almost gaily and said repeatedly that anything would be better than the suffering he had undergone during the past year.

I told him of the main lines of the policy which I thought we should follow. They were (1) To maintain the independence of *The Times* towards all parties, politicians, and governments, supporting them when we thought them right, opposing them when we thought them wrong, and remaining neutral when we were in doubt; (2) to work immediately for a settlement of the Irish question both for its own sake and because there could be no real stability in Anglo-American relations until it were settled; (3) to support France and the other Allies in all their just claims, so that we might admonish them without offence whenever it should be necessary to do so in the interests of Great Britain and of Europe; (4) to advocate and support the League of Nations as the chief hope of avoiding future war — albeit constructively and critically rather than blindly; and (5) to deal fairly with all Labour demands and movements in Great Britain while resisting firmly any Bolshevist tendencies.

I told him also that I did not conceive the functions of an editor as those of a journalistic autocrat but that I should strive to make of the staff of *The Times* a team all of whose members would be aware of the policy of the paper so that they might work in harmony with it according to their knowledge and several capacities.

With this programme Northcliffe agreed. Those who imagine him to have been a merely sensational journalist never saw beneath the surface of his mind; just as those who imagined him to be guided solely or chiefly by personal ambition or rancour overlooked what was greatest in him — his intense patriotism and solicitude for the future welfare of Great Britain and of the Empire. Erratic he often was, and hard to understand; and, as he lost strength, his defects tended to become more evident than his qualities. But he was, in his way, a genius, a large-hearted man, intensely intuitive and full of a faith which, despite the peculiarity of its modes of expression, was real and deep.

It would not be seemly nor would it be of public interest to describe in any detail the work of an editor of *The Times*. He receives so much information and so many confidences in virtue of his position that they belong to *The Times*, not to him personally. He is so greatly indebted to the devotion of his colleagues, from his immediate assistants to the printers and mechanical staff, that he cannot claim special credit for whatever good work may be done. It has been said that the editor of *The Times* is like the captain of a battleship — and, it may be added, of a battleship in constant action amid mine fields. But of some things which *The Times* sought to do, and actually did, between June, 1919, and the end of November, 1922, I am entitled to speak because they were, and are, matters of legitimate public interest.

THE IRISH QUESTION

Of these the first is the Irish question. From boyhood I had been interested in it. My earliest political memories were associated with the General Elections of 1885 and 1886 in

Suffolk, just before and after the secession of the Liberal Unionists from the Liberal Party when Mr. Gladstone began to advocate Home Rule. During my work abroad I had frequently observed the hampering effect of the Irish question upon British policy and, in particular, upon Anglo-American relations. In the spring of 1914 I had noted with suspicion the keenness of the interest taken by German diplomatists in the dispute over Mr. Asquith's Home Rule Act and in the episodes that led to the formation of the Ulster volunteers on the one hand, the Irish volunteers on the other, and to the Curragh incident; and I had thought the visit of the German Emperor's private informant, Professor Schiemann, to London and Ireland in April, 1914, especially significant. When war broke out, the reason for German eagerness to foment strife in Ireland had become clear to all. Like many others, I had then been disappointed by Sir Edward Carson's failure to join Mr. John Redmond in making a joint appeal to the Irish people. The Easter rebellion of 1916 and the failure of the subsequent Irish Convention, when it seemed to be within sight of success, had shown the impossibility of solving the Irish question by palliatives, while the growth of the Sinn Fein movement and the sympathies it aroused in the United States were phenomena that could not safely be ignored. But it was not until I came into close and almost daily contact with members of the American Peace delegation in Paris, and met also a number of American public men unattached to it, that I understood the urgency of an Irish settlement if Anglo-American coöperation were to be possible in future. In the United States, Cardinal Gibbons had forsaken his prudent attitude and had associated himself publicly with a demand for Irish independence; and during the Peace Conference two Irish-American agitators, Messrs. Walsh and Dunne, had obtained, through Colonel House, permission to visit Ireland and had made a thoroughly incendiary report. Thus matters were working up towards a crisis which threatened to be the more serious because British public opinion would certainly, and rightly, resent any attempt to settle Anglo-Irish relations under foreign pressure; and it was clear

that, if those relations remained unsettled, foreign pressure, in one form or another, would inevitably be applied.

Therefore, while I was in London in April, 1919, I had impressed upon my colleagues the necessity of ascertaining and publishing, as quickly yet as carefully as possible, the facts of the position in Ireland. We had chosen a special correspondent for this purpose and had sent him to Ireland but, in a few weeks, he had become so enthusiastic and unbalanced a partisan of Sinn Fein that his contributions were useless as statements of fact. We, however, wanted the facts as a basis for a definite policy. As far as my experience goes, policies in accordance with preconceptions, or antecedent desires, invariably break down. A good policy should fit the facts — economic, social, political, religious and psychological — as a glove fits the hand. In our case there was, it is true, an antecedent desire to promote a settlement, but it was chastened by the conviction that to kick against the facts would be a sorry and disastrous business.

Thus the matter stood over until my return to London early in June when, by good fortune, we secured the help of Captain R. J. Shaw, a young Irish officer who had been, before the war, closely connected with the Southern Irish Unionists and after wounds disabling him for service at the front, had been selected as one of the secretaries to the Irish Convention. In that capacity he had gained intimate knowledge of all sections of Irish thought and had worked out a draft scheme for a settlement which he had submitted to the Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Ian Macpherson. The authorities at Dublin Castle were, however, afraid of it; and, after submitting it without result to a member of the Cabinet in London, Captain Shaw brought it to me. I went through it carefully, suggested some modifications, and agreed with the author that its main ideas might form the basis of a series of articles stating the facts of the situation. Ultimately we decided that the articles should be written or, at least, approved of, by a triumvirate of experienced Irishmen, all of them Unionists but all convinced of the need for a settlement and of the general soundness of the scheme proposed.

LEWISHAM PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Therefore, on June 28, 1919, *The Times* published the first of ten articles on "Irish Peace" which continued until July 9th. It supported them in its leading columns and urged strongly upon the Government the necessity of taking in hand an Irish settlement without delay.

THE DOMINION OF IRELAND

In the meantime, a resolution of the United States Senate on Ireland caused *The Times* to define, in a leading article published on June 16th, the broad conditions of the Irish problem. This article had been carefully written and revised on Sunday, June 15th, when news came that Captain Alcock and Lieutenant Whitten-Brown had won the £10,000 prize offered by Lord Northcliffe in the *Daily Mail* for the first direct transatlantic aëroplane flight. They had left Newfoundland at 4:28 P.M. on June 14th and had landed at Clifton in Ireland at 8:40 A.M. on the 15th. Northcliffe sent for me on the afternoon of the 15th to ask whether I approved of a letter of congratulation he had written to Captain Alcock; and, as I was at that moment correcting the proofs of the leading article on Ireland, I took them to him. His letter, which showed his usual vision, ran:

MY DEAR ALCOCK

A very hearty welcome to the pioneer of direct Atlantic flight. Your journey with your brave companion, Whitten-Brown, is a typical exhibition of British courage and organizing efficiency.

Just as in 1913, when I offered the prize, I felt that it would soon be won, so do I surely believe that your wonderful journey is a warning to cable monopolists and others to realize that, within the next few years, we shall be less dependent upon them unless they increase their wires and speed up. Your voyage was made more quickly than the average press messages of 1919. Moreover, I look forward with certainty to the time when London morning newspapers will be selling in New York in the evening, allowing for the difference between British and American time, and *vice versa* in regard to New York evening journals reaching London next day. Then we shall no longer suffer from the danger of garbled quotations due to telegraphic compression. Then, too, the American and British peoples will understand each other better as they are brought into closer daily touch.

Illness prevents me from shaking you by the hand and personally presenting the prize. But I can assure you that your welcome will be equal to that of Hawker and his gallant American compeer, Read, whose great accomplishment has given us such valuable data for future Atlantic work.

I rejoice at the good augury that you departed from and arrived at those two portions of the British Commonwealth, the happy and prosperous Dominion of Newfoundland, and the future equally happy and prosperous Dominion of *Ireland*.

Yours sincerely,
NORTHCLIFFE.

When I came to the concluding phrase "the happy and prosperous Dominion of Newfoundland, and the future equally happy and prosperous Dominion of Ireland," I said to him, "We are not going as far as that. It may come to that presently; but for *The Times* to foreshadow it now would be impolitic."

"Shall I strike it out of the letter?" he asked. "I am certain that Ireland will be a Dominion before many years are over, but if you think it will do any harm for me to say it, I will strike it out."

"No," I answered, "leave it in. It is your personal opinion and you are entitled to state it in a signed letter. But our policy will be more moderate."

Thus the letter to Captain Alcock was sent; and Northcliffe, after reading the proofs of the leading article, agreed with them also saying, "I am so glad you have referred to the Americans as 'foreigners.' The great majority of Americans look upon us as foreigners and, what is more, as the most bothersome sort of foreigners with whom they have to deal. Until our people learn to drop the 'cousinship' talk and to look upon the Americans as what they are, a big, foreign, English-speaking nation, we shall never get a real understanding with them. If there is to be insistence upon cousinship, or kinship, it should come from them, not from us. When *we* talk of it, they think we are trying to patronize them. I am speaking, of course, of the American people as a whole, not of the New Englanders or Virginians or the people on the Atlantic seaboard whom most Englishmen take for typical

Americans. We have got to get it into people's heads that the Americans are quite grown up; and the best way to do it is to drop the notion that they are some sort of relations. Of course, lots of them are proud of their English origin and many of the best of them love England; but sentiment of that kind cuts very little ice in actual, everyday politics."

The leading article in *The Times* said, with reference to the resolution of the United States Senate:

> There have been determined attempts during the last few months to make the question of Ireland an international issue, and to place Great Britain in the position of a mere party to a dispute in which foreign States would act as advisers and intermediaries, if not as judges. It is as well to say at once that attempts of this kind are bound to fail. They will be wrecked upon the firm purpose of the British people to exercise for themselves the right of self-determination. As well might the British Parliament suggest that the United States for instance, should welcome British recommendations in regard to the relations between the Federal Authorities and a State of the Union, as that any foreign Legislature should expect Great Britain to take account of its resolutions in regard to the position of Ireland. . . .
>
> In saying this we are by no means blind to the fact that many millions of American citizens of Irish race are, naturally and inevitably, interested in the settlement of the Irish problem. We are aware of the close connection between some of their political organizations and sundry militant organizations in Ireland. We are acquainted with the efforts of German intriguers in the United States to use the American Irish as their catspaws. We know, too, how large the Irish vote bulks in American home and foreign policy, and we are also persuaded that, without a frank and demonstrably honest attempt to secure a fair and even a generous solution of the Irish question—such a solution as the great majority of sane Irishmen could in future regard as not only tolerable but satisfactory — the real and the supposed grievances of Ireland may envenom Anglo-American relations for years to come. It is not, therefore, from any failure to realize the dimensions of the Irish question that we insist upon its essentially British character in the first place. Those who wish Ireland well — and we count ourselves among their number — could make no worse mistake than to treat the Irish question as a purely international problem, comparable with any of the new problems which the Peace Conference has essayed to solve. And it is precisely because of the British character of the problem that it is incumbent upon the British Government to address themselves,

without delay and without thought of petty Parliamentary or electoral advantage, to its solution. . . .

Only thus, we are persuaded, will it be possible to bring tranquillity and well-being to Ireland, and only thus can the world be brought to understand that, while the Irish question is chiefly a British concern, the British people intend that, within the limits of their own security, Ireland shall be mistress of her fate.

Before the series of special articles upon "Irish Peace" was concluded, I received a visit from an important member of the Cabinet whose experience of Ireland had been gained as Irish Secretary in a former Administration.

"Those articles of yours are very interesting," he said. "What are you driving at?"

"A settlement," I answered.

"Have you got a plan?"

"Yes."

"Are you going to publish it?"

"No."

"Why?"

"Because we think it is a good plan and we do not wish to spoil it. We know enough of the Cabinet and of the Prime Minister to be sure that, if a scheme for an Irish settlement were inspired by God Almighty and were published first in *The Times*, it would be rejected by the Government because it had been published in *The Times*."

"You are a little hard on us," answered the Cabinet Minister, "but I see what you mean. May I see your scheme?"

I promised to send him a copy of it, and to cause another copy to be placed before Mr. Lloyd George. Before the Cabinet Minister left, I added:

"You may tell your colleagues in the Cabinet and the Prime Minister that, if the Government will take this scheme as it is, or improve upon it, they will be able to count upon the support of *The Times*, and, as far as I am able to answer for Lord Northcliffe, upon that of the *Daily Mail* and the other newspapers which Lord Northcliffe controls, and that we shall never claim credit for having helped to promote a settlement, if a settlement is reached on such a basis."

"You are very generous," observed the Cabinet Minister.

"No, we are tactical," I replied. "In the interests of the country we want a settlement, and we are willing to leave the prestige to others."

We soon learned that neither the Prime Minister, nor the Cabinet as a whole, was disposed to recognize the urgency of an Irish settlement; and on July 12, 1919, Sir Edward Carson spoke at Belfast in a tone of complete hostility to any reconsideration of the position. On July 21st, Mr. Lloyd George also referred in the House of Commons to the Irish question in terms that showed it would be hopeless to expect the Government to evolve an Irish policy of their own. At the same time I received a large number of letters from readers in many parts of England and Ireland complaining that, though *The Times* was pressing the Government to produce a scheme of settlement for Ireland, it seemed incapable of putting forward any scheme of its own, and that its insistence was merely a sign of its rancorous hostility towards Mr. Lloyd George. The ministerial press took up the strain and taunted us with inability to suggest anything practical. Therefore, I informed the Cabinet Minister who had visited me that I must withdraw my undertaking not to publish our scheme; but we decided to publish it in a form that would not preclude the eventual adoption of its main features by the Government as an independent official scheme. So anxious were we not to hallmark it as "*The Times* Scheme," and thus to imperil its chances of success, that it was put into the form of a leading article which filled four columns — probably the longest leading article on one subject that had ever appeared in *The Times*.

THE SCHEME

The article insisted that we claimed no credit for our suggestions or patent rights in them. We claimed only the right to have them examined in good faith and dispassionately by all whom they concerned. The position was that the Home Rule Act of 1914 was on the Statute Book but that it could

not be enforced in its present form. Opinion in Ireland had almost unanimously turned against it. Ulster could only be brought within its provisions by direct coercion — and it was a postulate of any Irish settlement that Ulster should not be coerced into subjection to an Irish Parliament. Sinn Fein was equally opposed to the Act. The efforts of the Irish Convention in 1917 and 1918 had made the deadlock worse, chiefly because the British Government had not earnestly worked for a solution in the spring of 1918. Proposals to divide Ireland into two entirely separate parts, excluding Ulster from an Irish settlement, were counsels of despair. The ultimate aim must be Irish unity by consent. Therefore we proposed that an Act of Settlement should create two State Legislatures, one for the whole of Ulster, the other for the rest of Ireland, with full powers of legislation on home affairs, an executive responsible to the State Legislature being set up in each State. At the same time the Act of Settlement should create an All-Ireland Parliament on the basis of equal representation of the two States, Ulster having as many representatives as the rest of Ireland. This All-Ireland Parliament should consist of a single Chamber formed by delegations from the State Legislatures. With the exception of matters involving the Crown and the Succession, the making of war and peace, and the control of the armed forces (which would be retained by the British Imperial Parliament), the All-Ireland Parliament would possess fiscal autonomy and control direct taxation, customs, and excise. Each State Legislature would have a veto upon the application, within its own State, of any legislation passed by the All-Ireland Parliament. Irish representatives, elected on the basis of population, would continue to sit at Westminster, and constitutional disputes between the Imperial and Irish Parliaments would be decided by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and disputes between the All-Ireland Parliament and the State Legislatures by an Irish Supreme Court. Ireland would contribute annually to the Imperial Exchequer a sum calculated on her relative fiscal capacity, this sum to cover interest on

the Irish share of the British National Debt, Irish contributions to the Sinking Fund and to the cost of Imperial defence.

The main object of this scheme was to give to each part of Ireland safeguards against oppression or coercion by the other, but at the same time to bring Irishmen together in a Central Parliament empowered to deal with the interests of Ireland as a whole and thus to foster among them a sense of national unity. At the moment when the scheme was published we had reason to believe that the greater part of public opinion in Ulster would welcome it and that at least seventy-five per cent. of the people of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught would accept it — if it were put through swiftly. Our leading article was discussed eagerly throughout Great Britain, Ireland, and also in the United States; and though the Government still declined to take positive action, they began to feel that something would have to be done.

A Cabinet Committee of nine members was therefore appointed in the autumn to examine the possibility of a settlement; and throughout the autumn *The Times* continued to support the idea of a settlement by every available fact and argument. Towards the middle of January, 1920, a prominent member of the Cabinet Committee called upon me. He told me that though the Committee had approached the question from three different standpoints, none of which was the same as ours, it had, by a process of elimination, reached conclusions practically identical with ours. It had therefore decided to report unanimously to the Prime Minister in favour of a scheme which, in all essentials, might be taken for that which *The Times* had advocated; but it feared that, in view of this similarity, the Prime Minister would reject its report on the ground that it would enable "Northcliffe and *The Times* to shout victory." He therefore asked me what could be done.

I told him that he and his colleagues must take a mean view of our motives if they thought we should allow journalistic vanity of any kind to endanger a settlement. "Make your report to the Prime Minister," I said, "and give him the assurance which, if you wish, I will give you in writing that,

even if the Government scheme is identical with ours down to the last comma, neither *The Times* nor any newspaper under Lord Northcliffe's control will claim credit for it in editorial comment or even in a headline. It will be treated as the spontaneous product of the Cabinet and will be supported by *The Times* in so far as it may in reality correspond to our own views, though we shall reserve our right to criticize any of its features which we may think defective."

The Cabinet Committee made its report to Mr. Lloyd George; and the Government scheme, which presently became the Government of Ireland Bill, was drafted. Though it reduced the area of the Northern Irish State to six counties, instead of the whole nine counties of Ulster as we had advocated, and though it withheld fiscal autonomy, or the control of customs and excise, from Ireland, and whittled down the All-Ireland Parliament to an anæmic Central Council, we gave general support to it, urging such amendments as we thought proper and pressing only for speed in its enactment.

The Act received the King's assent on September 23, 1920, and preparations were made in the six counties of Ulster to carry it into effect. But, in the rest of Ireland, where the Sinn Fein movement had made great headway, it was not accepted. The Sinn Fein demand for an independent Irish Republic was maintained. The Dail, or Sinn Fein Parliament, which had been set up in defiance of British authority, had organized its own courts and departments of Government so effectually that Dublin Castle Administration broke down. The barracks of the Royal Irish Constabulary were attacked and burned in many parts of the country until, towards the middle of 1920, the Constabulary were reinforced by other forces — nicknamed "Black and Tans," after their uniforms — and, subsequently, by the Auxiliary Royal Irish Constabulary. A terrible period of ruffianism began, with organized shooting, looting, and burning on both sides, the real, if not the ostensible policy of the British Government being to give the Irish rebels a "taste of their own medicine" and to cast out the Irish devil by a British Beelzebub.

Whether the balance of criminality inclined to the Irish or to the British side it was, and is, impossible to determine. The Irish methods were abominable but the deeds and reprisals of the "Black and Tans" and of the Auxiliary Royal Irish Constabulary often caused those Englishmen who knew of them to blush. Many British officers of the better sort, who had served in Ireland, begged *The Times* to use all its influence to bring so deplorable a business to an end. We did our best — and incurred the deep displeasure, not only of the Government but of the public, which was unaware of the true position. While denouncing the villanies of the Irish "gunmen" we urged that a British Government, responsible for the good administration of a quarter of the human race, could not model its methods on those of a murder gang of Irish desperadoes; and we urged the folly of attempting to crush, by such methods, the resistance of "gunmen" who, as long as they were held to be "patriotic" by the mass of the Southern Irish people, would always be sheltered and helped against British reprisals. The only solution, we contended, would be so to amend the Government of Ireland Act as to make it acceptable to the more responsible leaders of the Southern Irish and to leave them to deal with their own recalcitrant "gunmen" who would not be likely to enjoy the same measure of support from the population when resisting Irish authority as they enjoyed when resisting British "Black and Tan-ism."

The Times can rarely have been more unpopular in England than during this period. Its circulation fell. Members of the Government denounced it, in season and out of season; and through many official channels the story was spread that its policy was inspired by a personal vendetta of Northcliffe against Lloyd George. Northcliffe was, indeed, placed in a difficult position. He supported us steadily, though without complete conviction, because he was persuaded that many of the "gunmen" in Ireland were not Irishmen at all, but criminal adventurers from Canada, the United States, and Australia. Strong pressure was also put upon him by members of his family; and he felt keenly the injustice of the in-

sinuation that the policy of *The Times* was dictated by personal animosity on his part against the Prime Minister. He viewed with concern the falling circulation of *The Times*. Yet he stood his ground almost to the last, despite threatening letters, and photographs with bullet holes marked in the forehead, which were delivered by hand at his country house. I also received threatening letters from Sinn Fein and "Black and Tan" sources alike; and at one time an offer of police protection was made to me. I declined it. *The Times* office was, however, guarded by special detectives night and day.

A PROFFERED TRUCE

By the autumn of 1920, the development of the war in Ireland — it deserved no lesser name — began to alarm both the British and the more reasonable of the Sinn Fein authorities. Mr. Arthur Griffith sent to London a special envoy whom Mr. C. J. Phillips (once more on temporary duty at the Foreign Office) brought into contact with some of the Prime Minister's personal advisers. The basis of the negotiations were proposals for an armistice between Sinn Fein and the British authorities, each side to call off hostilities simultaneously, and for a conference between representatives of both sides to discuss a possible settlement. Full fiscal autonomy for the thirty-two counties of Southern Ireland, which were to have their own police and a militia under the control of their own Parliament, were mentioned as possible conditions. The Navy was to remain under British control. When questioned about the Sinn Fein demand for a Republic, the Irish envoy wittily replied:

"I am a fisherman, and when I fish for salmon (trolling), I may hook a perch, a pike, a trout, or a salmon. If I hook a perch, I regard him as a nuisance — he only wastes my time. I kill him and throw him away. If I hook a pike, he may give me some sport; but I don't want him, and he may damage my bait or line. If I hook a trout, I take him into the boat and, if he is big, I appreciate him. But if I were to get fifteen trout for my day, and not get a salmon, I

would tell any inquiring angler whom I might meet, if he asked me did I get a fish, that I did not, for to me and to him a fish would mean nothing but a salmon."

"What about a salmon trout?" was the next question, and the envoy answered, "It would be better than a trout."

These negotiations lasted from the end of October until the beginning of December, 1920. I was informed of their course. Indeed, a summary of the conversations was brought to me almost daily and placed in custody in my safe. We supported the idea of a truce and of a conference throughout this period, as we had reason to know that a conference would have yielded results at least as favourable to Great Britain as those actually attained in the Irish Treaty a year later. But the British authorities in Dublin not only declined to stay, pending the result of the negotiations, the execution of Sinn Feiners whom they had caught, but they arrested Mr. Arthur Griffith himself. On November 9th, moreover, Mr. Lloyd George, who was aware of the negotiations, declared at the Lord Mayor's Guildhall banquet that the British authorities had "murder by the throat." There could be no peace in Ireland, he added, until the murder conspiracy were crushed. Everyone desired peace, but "when he had invited Irishmen to speak for Ireland, no one had dared to speak, so great was the terror. This tyranny must be broken."

In commenting upon this speech *The Times* said, on November 10, 1920, "It is not true that there was no response to the Prime Minister's invitation. There was a response, but he ignored it"; and it added, "the gravest of the grave charges to which the Government has laid itself open is that of not having sought, fairly and honestly, to enlist on the side of peace in Ireland the great bulk of Irish opinion that abhors murder."

Thus the efforts of Mr. Griffith's envoy, and those of the Englishmen who helped him, were frustrated, and things went from bad to worse. The Crown forces in Ireland lost ground steadily, despite heavy reinforcements, until, in 1921, the military authorities in Ireland became convinced that the

British Government had a choice between two alternatives — either to make peace, or to put an army of 250,000 men into Ireland, at a probable cost of £400,000,000, so as to crush all resistance and to hold the country down by main force.

THE KING'S VISIT TO ULSTER

While this was the situation in the South of Ireland, preparations were being made in the North for the opening of the Ulster Parliament and for the installation of the Ulster Government. Early in 1921 the King had consented to open in person the Parliament at Belfast. But, during the spring, fierce rioting with much bloodshed broke out in Belfast between Orangemen and Catholics, and the local position became extremely strained. Early in June, the British Government announced, nevertheless, that the King and Queen would go to Belfast in state to open the Ulster Parliament on Wednesday, June 22nd. The announcement caused serious misgivings in London. Two Irishmen, one of them Unionist and the other Nationalist in sympathies, called upon me in succession to say that if the King went to Belfast, he might be the victim of an outrage, and to urge that the only means of averting the danger would be for *The Times* to protest strongly against his going. Of the two, the Irishman of Ulster sympathies was the more emphatic. I admitted that the danger to the King was not imaginary, but said that if there could be one thing worse than the exposure of the King to peril, it would be the creation of a feeling that the King had been afraid to go; whereupon the Irishman exclaimed, dramatically, "His blood be on your head."

It soon transpired that the King, who has never flinched from what he has thought his duty, was determined to go; and in *The Times* office we cast about for means of diminishing the danger to him, if danger there were. The Duke of Connaught had recently made, in the King-Emperor's name, an admirable appeal for concord among the Indian peoples when opening the Indian Legislative Assembly. Therefore, we thought that, if the King could speak to Ireland at Bel-

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fast in a similar strain, not merely as King of Ireland but as the head of the whole Commonwealth of British peoples, his words might be heard. The policy followed by *The Times* since June, 1919, had given it special influence in Ireland. No Irish party agreed with it entirely, but all honest Irishmen had become convinced of its sincerity and goodwill.

Thus, after ascertaining, indirectly, the view of Lord Fitz-Alan, the Viceroy, and the nature of the advice which he would offer to the Crown, I asked Sir Edward Grigg, then Mr. Lloyd George's political secretary and formerly a member of *The Times'* editorial staff, to discuss the position with me. I told him that, if the Government would play its part, *The Times* would be willing to assure the Irish people, before the King started for Belfast, and again on the day of his arrival there, that His Majesty would come as the Head of the Empire in a spirit of unfeigned goodwill towards all sections of the Irish people. I undertook to communicate these leading articles of *The Times* to all the chief Irish newspapers in advance and to send *The Times* itself by aëroplane to Belfast on the morning of Wednesday, June 22nd, so that it might be widely distributed before the King's arrival at noon that day.

Sir Edward Grigg, whom I saw on Friday, June 17th, thought this idea excellent. He added, however, that it would be very difficult for the Government to "play up" because the Prime Minister felt very bitterly that the Irish did not trust him. I urged that the Government could not possibly let the King go to Ireland with a message of goodwill, yet do nothing to help him — and I urged that the Government should avail itself of an opportunity which would arise in the House of Lords on the afternoon of the King's departure, to make some announcement that would favourably affect Irish feeling. An influential Irish peer, Lord Donoughmore, had brought forward in the House of Lords on Thursday, June 16th, a motion for the amendment of the Government of Ireland Act by the concession of full fiscal autonomy to Ireland. This debate stood adjourned until the afternoon of Tuesday, June 21st, and the King was to leave London for Belfast at noon that day. Therefore, I argued, the Government might

sweeten the whole atmosphere by announcing in the House of Lords its readiness to grant fiscal autonomy. Grigg promised to do his best; and I promised him that, in any case, *The Times* would go ahead and assure the Irish people on the morning of Monday, June 20th, and again on Wednesday, June 22nd, that the King was coming in a conciliatory and fatherly spirit.

A HARD DECISION

On the Monday, *The Times* consequently published a leading article of which the principal passage ran:

The exalted conception of his Royal and Imperial duties that has inspired the King in every act of his reign, has certainly impelled him to undertake a task which, in happier circumstances, might well have seemed to possess a wider and more significant scope. It would, however, be wholly wrong to regard this visit as a visit to Ulster alone. The Ulster Parliament has been first in the field in accepting the Government of Ireland Act; but the King is, and feels himself to be, King of the whole of Ireland. He would have gone with equal readiness and pleasure to inaugurate a Southern Irish Parliament or to discharge the greater function of opening a united Parliament for Ireland. The Ulstermen who have taken their new Constitution at the hands of the Imperial Parliament are neither more nor less his subjects and our fellow citizens than the Irishmen who have hitherto refused it. The King's solicitude for the welfare and happiness of the South is no less sincere than his regard for the North, but his affection for Ireland as a whole is deeper than either. His visit to the capital of Ulster implies no favouritism towards any one section of his Irish subjects. It implies the performance of a truly Royal duty in conveying to a new self-governing unit and, indeed, to the Irish nation, in the name of the Empire, greetings and a pledge of goodwill on behalf of all the peoples of that mighty brotherhood. In this sense, but in this sense alone, the Royal visit to Belfast should be regarded as a political manifestation. The lofty impartiality of the Crown transcends sectional differences and enables its wearer to view, not only without resentment, but with fatherly care, even those who would fain deny its authority or renounce their allegiance.

This article was also published simultaneously in the chief Irish newspapers of the North and the South. But, on the Tuesday night, when the final proofs of a second leading arti-

cle were being corrected in readiness for the despatch of *The Times* by aëroplane to Belfast early next morning, reports of speeches delivered by Lord Birkenhead, the Lord Chancellor, in the House of Lords upon Lord Donoughmore's motion that afternoon, and by the Secretary for War, Sir Laming Worthington-Evans, in the House of Commons that evening, were brought to me. To my horror I saw that both of them were at variance with the terms in which, I had reason to hope, the King's Speech at Belfast had been drafted by the Cabinet. Lord Birkenhead rejected Lord Donoughmore's and Lord Dunraven's appeal for the grant of fiscal autonomy and for a conciliatory policy, reminded the Irish of the " stubborn and tenacious character " of the English people, alluded to English pertinacity during the Great War, and concluded, " If we should be forced to the melancholy conclusion that by force, and force alone, can this mischief be exterminated or prevented, it is a conclusion which, however sorrowfully we accept it, we shall not hesitate logically and completely to act upon."

In the House of Commons, Sir Laming Worthington-Evans said the troops in Ireland were fully employed. The conditions were far worse than war. In war there was a back area in which some rest could be obtained, but in Ireland there was no safety or security of any kind. It was said that more troops should be sent. That was exactly what the British Government were doing. Battalions were being sent across as fast as possible. Officers and men on duty in Ireland would be supported with the full might of England. Unity of command had also been recommended. That soldiers and police should be brought under one command meant the extension of martial law in Ireland. The Government were now considering the matter; and if it were found necessary, for the purpose of giving proper support to the troops, he hoped it would be carried out.

As I read these reports and scanned again the proofs of the leading article, I felt that I had never had a harder decision to take. *The Times'* leading article began:

To-day the mind of the nation turns eagerly and anxiously towards Ireland. Above all else, its hopes and prayers are centred upon the King and Queen, and upon their solemn mission of peace, so dutifully and so generously undertaken. Rarely has the tide of loyal gratitude run more strongly or more deeply in the hearts of the people. Once, in an age of simple faith, it was held that the divine authority of the Monarchy was manifest in the power of the Sovereign to cure the ills of his people by the Royal touch. That belief did not survive the pretensions of the House of Stuart; but, since their days, it has reappeared in another form, for Englishmen have learned that, where the nostrums of politicians have failed to abate the heats and fevers of the time, Royal intervention has seldom failed to bring relief. Therefore, they find ground for hope in to-day's proceedings at Belfast. To them the Irish problem, with all its daunting perplexities, has seemed insoluble, and they have looked, but looked in vain, for light or guidance from their elected representatives. But now that the King himself has gone to Ireland, they feel a new confidence. Therefore, the words of the Royal message will be read throughout the land this evening and to-morrow with an attention and respect which none save the King can command. The nation believes that in him its trust is not misplaced.

How could I sanction the publication of such an article when, in both the Houses of Parliament, the spokesmen of the Government had just spoken in an entirely different spirit? On the other hand, if those speeches were to go to Ireland unqualified by comment, they might aggravate the very danger which *The Times* had been labouring to avert. In a few moments, my decision was taken. I gave orders for the speech of the Secretary for War, which was the worse of the two, to be omitted from the edition of *The Times* destined for Ireland, and I let the leading article stand — with the addition of a severe rebuke to the Lord Chancellor and to the Government.

Next day, we awaited with comprehensible anxiety the text of the King's speech and the news of his reception in Belfast. In the loyalty of its enthusiasm, the reception surpassed all expectations. The speech ran:

For all who love Ireland, as I do with all my heart, this is a profoundly moving occasion in Irish history. My memories of the Irish people date back to the time when I spent many happy days in Ireland as a midshipman. My affection for the Irish people has

been deepened by successive visits since that time, and I have watched with constant sympathy the course of their affairs. I could not have allowed myself to give Ireland, by deputy alone, my earnest prayers and good wishes in the new era which opens with this ceremony, and I have therefore come in person, as the Head of the Empire, to inaugurate this Parliament on Irish soil. I inaugurate it with deep-felt hope, and I feel assured that you will do your utmost to make it an instrument of happiness and good government for all parts of the community which you represent.

This is a great and critical occasion in the history of the Six Counties, but not for the Six Counties alone; for everything which interests them touches Ireland, and everything which touches Ireland finds an echo in the remotest parts of the Empire. Few things are more earnestly desired throughout the English-speaking world than a satisfactory solution of the age-long Irish problems which, for generations, embarrassed our forefathers as they now weigh heavily upon us. Most certainly there is no wish nearer my own heart than that every man of Irish birth, whatever be his creed and wherever be his home, should work in loyal coöperation with the free communities on which the British Empire is based.

I am confident that the important matters entrusted to the control and guidance of the Northern Parliament will be managed with wisdom and with moderation, with fairness and due regard to every faith and interest, and with no abatement of that patriotic devotion to the Empire which you proved so gallantly in the Great War. Full partnership in the United Kingdom, and religious freedom, Ireland has long enjoyed. She now has conferred upon her the duty of dealing with all the essential tasks of domestic legislation and government; and I feel no misgiving as to the spirit in which you who stand here to-day will carry out the all-important functions entrusted to your care.

My hope is broader still. The eyes of the whole Empire are on Ireland to-day — that Empire in which so many nations and races have come together in spite of ancient feuds, and in which new nations have come to birth within the lifetime of the youngest in this Hall. I am emboldened by that thought to look beyond the sorrow and the anxiety which have clouded of late my vision of Irish affairs. I speak from a full heart when I pray that my coming to Ireland to-day may prove to be the first step towards an end of strife amongst her people, whatever their race or creed.

In that hope I appeal to all Irishmen to pause, to stretch out the hand of forbearance and conciliation, to forgive and to forget, and to join in making for the land which they love a new era of peace, contentment and goodwill. It is my earnest desire that, in Southern Ireland too, there may ere long take place a parallel to what is now

passing in this Hall; that there a similar occasion may present itself and a similar ceremony be performed.

For this the Parliament of the United Kingdom has in the fullest measure provided the powers; for this the Parliament of Ulster is pointing the way. The future lies in the hands of my Irish people themselves. May this historic gathering be the prelude of a day in which the Irish people, North and South, under one Parliament or two, as those Parliaments may themselves decide, shall work together in common love for Ireland upon the sure foundation of mutual justice and respect.

Public relief at the happy course of the King's visit was intense. When he returned to London on the Thursday evening, huge crowds awaited him at Euston Station and still larger crowds assembled before Buckingham Palace to cheer him and the Queen. The Government, against which resentment was strong, hastened to congratulate their Majesties upon the success of their visit. On the Thursday morning *The Times* commented upon the situation in a leading article called "Playing the Game," which concluded:

Truly, those members of the Government who believe that the "war" policy [in Ireland] is wrong, yet acquiesce in it rather than risk their offices, cut a sorry figure. But the Government as a whole cut a figure sorrier still. They have failed to "play the game" towards the Sovereign who, with high courage and sense of duty, has played the game with them, with his peoples, and with the Empire.

I learned afterwards, on unimpeachable authority, that certain passages in the King's speech had been written by some members of the Cabinet on the Monday under the influence of the leading article in *The Times;* and that there had been a long debate in the Cabinet that day upon the expediency of granting fiscal autonomy to Ireland. At last, the proposal was rejected by a narrow majority on the plea that the British electorate would condemn a Government that had let the Belfast shipowners off their proper contribution to Imperial revenue.

Fortunately, the effect of this little-heartedness was more than neutralized by the King's bearing. Under the influence of the enthusiasm at Belfast and the manifestations of loyal relief upon the King's return to London, Mr. Lloyd George

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wrote, on Friday, June 24th, letters to Mr. De Valera, the Sinn Fein leader, and to Sir James Craig, the Prime Minister of Ulster, inviting them to a conference in London with members of the British Government. Though Sir James Craig accepted the invitation, Mr. De Valera hesitated and made conditions; but, after a visit from General Smuts to Dublin, a truce was proclaimed in Ireland on July 11, 1921, and the Anglo-Irish Conference met at Downing Street on September 29th. Through long and difficult negotiations it led to an agreement in the early hours of December 6th, when Southern Ireland was given the same constitutional status as the British Dominions of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, with the style of the "Irish Free State," the position of Ulster remaining as defined by the Government of Ireland Act.

Relief at this agreement was the more intense because hope of attaining it had been almost lost. Though I had left England at the end of October, 1921, to attend the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armaments, many congratulations reached me personally, by telegram and letter, from all parts of Great Britain and from many parts of the United States, while *The Times* was recognized on all hands to have been instrumental in bringing about the settlement. From the moment of the King's speech at Belfast in June, and especially after the proclamation of the Irish truce in July, the circulation *The Times* had lost by its advocacy of Irish peace was speedily regained and its position as the leading British journal was once more vindicated. Among the personal messages I received, that from the veteran journalist, man of letters and statesman, the late Lord Morley of Blackburn (better known as John Morley) may, without indiscretion, be reproduced. It ran:

FLOWERMEAD,
PRINCES ROAD,
WIMBLEDON PARK, S. W.
December 6, 1921.

DEAR MR. WICKHAM STEED:

Forgive me for intruding on you a word of admiring gratitude, appreciation, and respect for your most powerful, persevering, and

splendid share in the great event of the day. As an old hand in the Irish battle, I know only too well the risks, perils, and countless perversities of it. If *The Times* had been less firm and tactful, things would have gone wrong as fatally as they did with us others when *The Times* was relentless against us for thirty years. Lord Rosebery and I are the only two survivors, I think, of the first Home Rule Cabinet. And one of the two has long ceased to wave the flag.

Pray do not quarrel with me for this salutation.

Yours sincerely,

MORLEY of B.

THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

The Irish settlement undoubtedly helped to ensure the success of the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armaments. The influence of Irishmen in the United States ceased to be actively anti-British, and the British Delegation to the Washington Conference was regarded with greater goodwill than before. One of our objects in seeking to promote an Irish settlement was thus attained. From the moment when it had become known, in June, 1921, that President Harding wished to convene the Conference, Northcliffe had understood its significance and agreed that *The Times* should do everything possible to ensure its success. But Mr. George Harvey, the American Ambassador to London, felt misgivings as to the reception of President Harding's idea by the British Government. He feared, not altogether without reason, that some of its members wished Great Britain to take the initiative in convening a similar conference, and that any public manifestation of such a wish might be construed in the United States as proof of British jealousy. On July 6, 1921, a stir was made in the United States by an announcement that the British Government had invited the United States to join the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and thus to transform it into an Anglo-Japanese-American arrangement about the Pacific. Feeling in America against the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was strong, and the decisions of the British Imperial Conference (then assembled in London) upon its renewal were awaited with anxiety. I happened to meet Mr. Harvey at a reception towards midnight on Friday, July 8th, when he said, in a weary tone, " Your people

can upset the bag of beans if they want to, and, by golly, they've nearly done it." A declaration which Mr. Lloyd George had made the day before in the House of Commons to the effect that his ability to make a statement upon the Anglo-Japanese Treaty on Monday, July 11th, would depend "upon the replies received from the United States of America, Japan, and China," had perturbed the American Ambassador; and though this passage had been struck out of the official report of Parliamentary proceedings and a semi-official explanation had been issued that there could be no question of "replies" from the United States, China, and Japan since no invitations had been issued, Mr. Harvey felt that the British Government might be contemplating some step which his Government would not understand. He alluded to the likelihood that the United States would not be able to accept an invitation to a British Conference, on account of American feeling against the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

I told Mr. Harvey that a leading article had already been written, and would appear in *The Times* next morning, to remind our Government of the need for care in the matter of procedure, lest mistakes of method prevent the attainment of an object common to the British and the American peoples. But he was not reassured and asked me to see him next morning to discuss the situation.

When I called at his house he said, "Before I was out of bed this morning I had the whole of *The Times* editorial cabled to Washington. I nearly jumped out of my skin for joy. I think it will just do the trick"; and he asked me "to be on tap" at 6 o'clock next [Sunday] evening, because there might be important developments. But at that hour on Sunday there were no developments, and the Ambassador was "in the country." By 10 o'clock, however, a public announcement came from Washington that President Harding had asked Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan whether they would be ready to take part in a conference at Washington upon the limitation of armaments and also upon Pacific and Far Eastern problems.

A few minutes later a message was telephoned to me from the Prime Minister's residence at Chequers, where the Domin-

ion Prime Ministers were spending a week-end with him, to ask that, in commenting upon President Harding's invitation, *The Times* would give due credit to "the British initiative." The meaning of this message became clearer shortly after midnight when Mr. Harvey returned to London and informed me that he had been able to deliver President Harding's invitation to the Prime Minister at Chequers at the very moment when Mr. Lloyd George was discussing with the Dominion Prime Ministers a definite proposal to send out British invitations to a similar conference. It appeared that, upon receiving the leading article from *The Times* of Saturday, which Mr. Harvey had cabled, President Harding, who was on board his yacht, had written out with his own hand the invitation to the Washington Conference and had caused it to be sent by wireless to the State Department at Washington. Owing to delay in ciphering and deciphering, President Harding's invitation to Great Britain had only reached Mr. Harvey late on the Sunday afternoon, when he had motored to Chequers and delivered it to the Prime Minister. Thus, an unfortunate clash between British and American invitations had been avoided.

President Harding's invitation was soon accepted, and the date of the Washington Conference fixed. At that moment Lord Northcliffe was about to start on a journey to the Pacific and round the world which his doctors had ordered him to take for reasons of health. As soon as it appeared that the Conference in Washington would meet in November, he insisted not only that I should attend it but that I should accompany him on his journey to the United States and Canada and as far as the Pacific coast, in order to study on the spot the conditions under which the Conference would meet and to determine the policy of *The Times* in regard to it. He felt that, unless some means were found to terminate the Anglo-Japanese Alliance — preferably by merging it in a more general agreement about the Pacific — and to meet American wishes on the limitation of naval armaments, a serious situation might grow up between the United States and Japan, and that the position of the British Empire might become extremely embarrassing

notwithstanding the fact that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was not, and could not be, directed against the United States.

AN "INTERVIEW"

We sailed from Southampton on Saturday, July 16, 1921, and reached New York a week later. The heat in New York was overwhelming. Northcliffe tried to escape from it by staying with a friend outside the city. Thus I was left to deal with the legion of reporters who were anxious to secure statements from him upon the Washington Conference, the Irish situation, and, in particular, upon the boycott which the Foreign Office had declared against *The Times* in view of its opposition to Mr. Lloyd George's and Lord Curzon's candidatures as delegates to the Washington Conference. Upon the question of the "Curzon boycott" Lord Northcliffe said that "it was distasteful to him to discuss domestic affairs in a foreign country"; and I also avoided all reference to it. On Sunday, July 24th, however, the New York *Herald* published a long and obviously well-informed despatch from London upon the prospective terms of an Anglo-Irish settlement. Anxious to obtain Lord Northcliffe's views upon them, the editor of the New York *Herald* telephoned to him, and was advised to ask me for a statement which the New York *Herald* could publish in Lord Northcliffe's name. Consequently, I dictated some careful comment upon the *Herald's* despatch from London and confirmed the accuracy of its contention that the improvement in the Irish situation had been due to the King's speech at Belfast. This statement, which I revised in manuscript, was published prominently in the New York *Herald* of Monday, July 25th.

But, by some means or other, the New York *Times* ascertained, on the Sunday evening, that the New York *Herald* was about to publish, as authorized by Lord Northcliffe, a statement which I had made; and the editor asked me whether I would not make a similar statement on behalf of Lord Northcliffe to the New York *Times* also. I answered that I was not authorized to make a second statement; but, on being pressed

to make a personal statement, I consented to do so. A reporter from the New York *Times* came during dinner. While we were chatting informally, a message was brought to him inviting me to visit the New York *Times* office after dinner. I accepted, and agreed to dictate the statement in the New York *Times* office so that I could correct the manuscript before it was printed.

On reaching the New York *Times* office, I was told that the editor had telephoned to Lord Northcliffe, who had authorized me to make a statement in his name to the New York *Times* also. Therefore I dictated it as carefully as I had done in the case of the New York *Herald*, correcting the manuscript punctiliously before it went to the printer; and on being assured that nothing more would be published, except an account of Lord Northcliffe's movements during the day, I left the New York *Times* office at midnight.

To my astonishment, I found next morning that the statement I had made in the name of Lord Northcliffe was published in an obscure position and that an alleged "interview" with me was published prominently. It gave, in inverted commas, the text of an acrimonious conversation which was alleged to have taken place between the British Prime Minister and the King after the King's return from Belfast. I knew, and know, nothing of the terms of any such conversation.

I sought at once to communicate with the editor of the New York *Times*, but found that he would not be accessible until the Monday evening. In the meantime, Mr. Raymond Carroll, the New York correspondent of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, whom I had long known, called to enquire about the alleged "interview." He asked whether it were not a breach of trust. I assured him that it was worse than a breach of trust, since there had been no foundation for the words which I was alleged to have attributed to the King.

A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS

But that morning, unknown to me, an extraordinary *contre-temps* had occurred. Lord Northcliffe had telephoned from

the country to our office in New York and, on being asked whether he wished his statements to be telegraphed to England, had been understood to say the statements I had made should be cabled in his name. This was done but, by some oversight, the " interview " attributed to me by the New York *Times* was also telegraphed in Northcliffe's name. When he returned to New York in the evening to attend a dinner given in his honour, I met him for a few moments, in the presence of others, but had no opportunity to discuss the " interview " with him because, at that moment, the British Embassy at Washington telephoned to suggest that a secretary should come to New York to discuss arrangements for Northcliffe's projected visit to Washington. Northcliffe asked me, however, to go that night to Washington myself and to make the arrangements for his reception by President Harding. Therefore I left for Washington, still unaware that the " interview " had been telegraphed to England as having been given by Northcliffe.

Not until the following Friday, in Washington, did we learn of the sensation which this " interview " had, comprehensibly, made in England and of the communication from the King which the Prime Minister had read to the House of Commons. Lord Northcliffe telegraphed at once a denial to Lord Stamfordham, the King's Secretary, and we left Washington that evening for New York on our way to Toronto. Next morning, July 30th, the New York *Times*, published spontaneously a statement to the effect that " I had not had an opportunity of revising the manuscript of the interview "; and, unknown to me, the New York correspondent of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, telegraphed to his paper an account of his conversation with me on the previous Monday when, three days before the stir in London, I had declared the " interview " to be baseless. Inasmuch as his independent testimony was far more valuable than any subsequent statement from me could have been, I gave instructions for it to be telegraphed to London. It appeared prominently in *The Times* of August 1st and ran:

NEW YORK, *July 30.*

The Philadelphia *Public Ledger* this morning prints prominently

a despatch from its New York correspondent, Mr. Raymond Carroll, in which he states that on Monday, four days before Mr. Lloyd George read the King's statement in the House of Commons, he saw Mr. Steed at the Hotel Gotham, New York, and showed him a copy of the New York *Times* in which Mr. Steed was reported to have quoted the King as having asked Mr. Lloyd George if he was going to shoot all the people in Ireland and to have told the Prime Minister, "I cannot have my people killed in this manner." Mr. Carroll states that Mr. Steed immediately replied, "I never said it."

Mr. Carroll adds that Mr. Steed was "plainly very hurt at the treatment he had received" from the man sent to interview him on the Irish question. Mr. Steed said it was not a question of violation of confidence, which would have been bad enough. He insisted "I never said it at all."

At the same time Reuter's Agency issued the following telegram from New York:

30th July, 1921.

NEW YORK, *July 31.*—Mr. Wickham Steed, the editor of *The Times*, questioned in regard to his alleged interview with a representative of the New York *Times* said:

"Direct statements are attributed to me. I did not make and I could not have made them because neither Mr. Lloyd George nor the King told me what they said to one another. Regarding the actual facts of the Irish situation, it is a fact that none can contest that the possible settlements growing out of the truce can directly be attributed to the King's speech at Belfast — a great-hearted and considerate speech.

"It is also incontestable that the King feels for all his subjects an equal solicitude and nothing would rejoice him more than to see prospective peace in Ireland. *The Times* has worked very hard for two years to promote the Irish settlement that the Government seems to be approaching. We have given the Lloyd George Government our fullest support when it seemed to be treading the path of peace, and we shall continue to give our fullest support to efforts towards a successful conclusion. No one knows that better than Mr. Lloyd George who for two years has had pertinent reason to know how true it is. That, and that alone, was the sense of the quite informal talk I had with a representative of the New York *Times*."

REUTER.

There, as far as I was concerned, the matter ended; but in justice to my colleagues of the American and Canadian press it is right to say that in no other of the many dozens of "inter-

views" with, and statements by, me which they published during my journey, were my words seriously misrepresented.

THE PACIFIC PROBLEM

From Toronto, Northcliffe and I travelled to Vancouver, whence he sailed for New Zealand. We spent some hours in Winnipeg on the way and were accompanied, during portions of the journey, by prominent Canadian publicists. From them, and at Vancouver as well as at Victoria (British Columbia), and, subsequently, at Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and San Diego, I gained impressions of the American-Japanese situation, and of the position of British Columbia and the Western provinces of the Dominion of Canada in regard to it, that convinced me of the need for a reconsideration of the prospective policy of the British Empire at the Washington Conference. Unless the Anglo-Japanese Alliance could be abrogated, or merged painlessly into some more general agreement, I came to the conclusion that the people of British Columbia, and of Western Canada generally, would be likely to side with the United States in any conflict that might arise between Japan and America in the Pacific; and that, if only for the sake of Canadian cohesion, the Eastern provinces of the Dominion would stand with the Western provinces.

The reasons for anti-Japanese feeling in Western Canada are too well-known to need explanation. The consideration which appealed most strongly to me was that Japanese settlers and fishermen, who were subject to Japanese military discipline, had acquired so detailed a knowledge of the topography and the strategic possibilities of British Columbia, as to be able, in the event of a conflict, practically to sever communications between British Columbia and the rest of the world in a few hours. I discussed these possibilities with the British authorities on the spot and also with the Commander of the American Pacific Squadron which was then at Vancouver. I found them alive to the situation. After visiting California and returning to Washington I discussed the outlook also with the Secretary of State, Mr. Hughes and, very frankly, with

the Japanese Ambassador, Mr. Shidehara, whom I asked to inform Viscount Makino, Count Chinda, and other friends in Japan of my belief that Japan would be wise to accept the transformation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance into a larger and more general agreement, and to come to Washington with such a policy of peace as to ensure the success of the Conference.

From Washington I went to Montreal and Ottawa, where I was able to consult Mr. Meighen, the Prime Minister, and the Governor-General, Lord Byng; and, on returning to England in the second half of September, I put my conclusions confidentially before the Admiralty, the Foreign Office and, subsequently, Mr. Balfour, after his appointment as chief British delegate to the Conference.

At that moment, the policy favoured by Lord Curzon and the Government was based on the consideration that the British Empire, as the ally of Japan — though not technically her ally against the United States — and as a great Asiatic Power, ought to strive for peace in the Pacific by holding the balance even between Japan and the United States. To this end, it was thought, the British Delegation should maintain at Washington an attitude of lofty, albeit friendly, neutrality towards each of them so that its impartiality might not be open to question should British good offices be needed in any dispute, or clash of interests, that might arise between Japan and the United States.

My enquiries inclined me to doubt the wisdom of this policy. I thought that, since the British Empire could not side with Japan — in arms or politically — in the event of a Japanese-American war, and since it might not be possible for some portions of the British Empire to keep out of such a conflict, Japan ought to know that aggressive action on her part might compel all the English-speaking nations to side against her. Clearness on this point, it seemed to me, would strengthen the hands of moderate statesmen in Japan and help them to moderate the tendencies of the Japanese General Staff and to increase the chances of a successful Conference at Washington. No position, I felt, could well be less dignified or more danger-

ous than that of a British delegation at Washington which, after endeavouring to remain benevolently neutral as between the United States and Japan at the Washington Conference — with the result that the suspicions of both would be aroused — should presently be compelled, by care for the cohesion of the British Empire, to support the United States. Should the Washington Conference break down, it would leave the situation worse than before; and the best means of making the Washington Conference succeed would be for the American and the Japanese governments to know, from the outset, exactly where the British Empire stood. No offence to Japan would necessarily be involved in a straightforward policy. As soon as the Japanese Government should perceive that the British Government fully realized the possible implications of a Japanese-American conflict, it would understand that, in working for a settlement, the British delegation would be serving the higher interests of Japan herself.

I have reason to think that a confidential memorandum which I based on these considerations had some influence upon British policy at the Washington Conference. Mr. Balfour certainly appreciated its main arguments; and Sir Robert Borden, the chief Canadian delegate, to whom I gave a copy of it on my return to the United States in November, 1921, expressed complete agreement with it. Indeed, before I left Washington at the end of December, he urged me to make a flying trip to Canada and to speak upon the Washington Conference so as to help Canadians to understand that it was not something into which the British Empire and Canada had been inveigled by the United States, but was essentially in harmony with Canadian and British interests. Thus I spoke to large audiences at Montreal, Toronto, and Hamilton. Senator Pearce and Sir John Salmond, the delegates of Australia and New Zealand respectively, were also in agreement with my general view.

BALFOUR, THE PRESBYTERIAN

The course and results of the Washington Conference hardly need description. Among the international gatherings I have

attended it was unique in its atmosphere of goodwill, in comparative freedom from petty intrigue and in the directness of purpose shown by its organizers. Its opening was preceded by the burial of the American "Unknown Warrior" in the cemetery at Arlington where a service was held in the magnificent open-air amphitheatre there. The Americans have a genius for reproducing great monuments in classical styles; and I am inclined to think some of their original architecture the most interesting in the modern world. The service at Arlington was evangelical in its simplicity. While watching it, I found myself wondering whether any "high-brow" British or European diplomatist would ever be able to understand the American people. Here was President Harding — a Baptist — with Mr. Hughes, his Secretary of State — also a Baptist — by his side, and most of the members of his Cabinet, Baptists, Methodists, or some other kind of what would be called in England "Nonconformists." Next day, I happened to meet Mr. Balfour in the street and spoke to him of the thought that had crossed my mind. He smiled and said, "Do you know, while I was sitting on the platform at Arlington, something like your idea passed through my own mind, and I said to myself, 'Thank God! In Scotland I am a Presbyterian.'"

Unwittingly, Mr. Balfour thus gave me a clue to his success at Washington. Whereas, at the Paris Peace Conference, where I had seen him frequently, I had been disheartened by his sceptical and half-amused detachment from the intrigues, appetites, and passions that filled the lives and vitiated the work of most of his fellow delegates, I found him at Washington so full of fervour that I came to believe in the existence of a "Presbyterian Balfour" of whom his fellow countrymen had no knowledge. In Paris he had been so bored that he frequently slept during the meetings of the Council of Ten and during those of the minor Council of Four that continued to sit after the signing of the Peace on July 19, 1919. His faculty for sleeping during long discussions had then been the subject of a good story. When the minor Council of Four was about to meet, Signor Tittoni, the Italian representative, had asked Clemenceau, as Chairman, not to convene it earlier than

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3:30 in the afternoon, because his doctor had ordered him always to take a nap after luncheon. Thereupon Mr. Polk, the American representative, had begged Clemenceau not to extend the sittings beyond 6:30 p. m. because Mr. Polk had been ordered, for reasons of health, always to take a nap before dinner. Clemenceau, then in his seventy-ninth year, with a bullet in his lung, said vigorously, "Good. The sittings of the Council will begin at 3:30 precisely, and will end at 6:30 precisely. Thus, M. Tittoni will be able to sleep before them, Mr. Polk will sleep after them, and Mr. Balfour will sleep during them."

In Washington Mr. Balfour may have slept at night, but he showed no signs of sleeping at the sittings of the Conference. So vigorous was he, so young and keen, that he was wittily chaffed on this score by Secretary Hughes at a dinner of the famous Gridiron Club in December, 1921. In proposing Mr. Balfour's health, Mr. Hughes said, " Many years ago, we used to hear of a British public man whose elegant scepticism parried all the thrusts of his opponents. His name was Balfour. He wrote books which were widely read in this country. They were called ' Philosophic Doubt ' and ' The Foundations of Belief.' Can the Balfour we have seen in our midst, so alert, so full of fire, of faith and of zeal, so ardent in his belief, be the same Balfour? — for those were very slender Foundations of Belief."

No delegate to the Washington Conference moved it, or the American public, more deeply than Mr. Balfour; and when the Anglo-Japanese Alliance had been successfully sublimated into the Four Power Pacific Treaty, he spoke of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance — of which he had been one of the authors as British Prime Minister in 1902 — with an eloquence that went far to remove any bitterness the Japanese may have felt. He said:

> This [Anglo-Japanese] Treaty, remember, was not a Treaty that had to be renewed. It was a Treaty that ran until it should be formally denounced by one of the two parties to it. It is true that the objects for which the Treaty had been created no longer required international attention; but after all, that Treaty, or its predecessors, has been in existence within a few days of twenty years. It has

served a great purpose in two great ways. It has stood the strain of common sacrifices, common anxieties, common efforts, common triumphs. When two nations have been united in that fiery ordeal, they cannot, at the end of it, take off their hats one to the other and politely part as two strangers might part who had traveled together for a few hours in a railway train. Something more, something closer, unites them than the mere words of the Treaty; and, as it were, gratuitously and without a cause, to have torn up the written contract, although it serves no longer any valid or effective purpose, might have led to misunderstandings in one nation just as much as the maintenance of that Treaty has led to misunderstandings in another.

A part less prominent than that of Mr. Balfour, but very noteworthy, was taken in the earlier stages of the Conference by Admiral Lord Beatty, the British First Sea Lord. When Secretary Hughes sprang upon the Conference, at its opening sitting, his drastic proposals for reductions in naval armaments, not a few American naval officers looked askance at a programme which threatened seriously to cut athwart their careers and the development of the service to which they were devoted. They half expected to find their British naval comrades animated by similar feelings — as doubtless many of them were; but, in private conferences with American officers, Lord Beatty made plain his conviction that it was the duty of every sailor, after such a war as that which had just been fought, to place his citizenship before his professional interests and to work whole-heartedly for the limitation of naval armaments. He might easily have turned professional feeling against the Hughes programme. To his honour, he took the harder and the higher path.

Indeed, the whole British Imperial delegation, with hardly an exception, worked magnificently, and as a well-trained team, at the Washington Conference, the chief trainer being the British Ambassador in Washington, Sir Auckland Geddes, who subordinated himself and his position entirely to the work in hand. Its only serious mistake was made during the discussion on the question of submarines when, in its zeal to score a point against the obstinate French demand for the retention of submarines, it cited inaccurately some articles that

had been written, from a purely technical standpoint, by a French naval expert, Captain Castex. In those articles, Captain Castex reminded a certain school of French naval officers that the methods of torpedo-boat warfare which they had once advocated, debarred them from complaining of German submarine methods. German methods, Captain Castex argued, had been no worse than those which sundry French naval writers had recommended, so eager had they been to prove the value of small craft in naval warfare. From the standpoint of strict warfare, German methods might be justified. But the German error, like that of French advocates of small craft, had been to forget that preponderance in large craft, or capital ships, could alone guarantee success at sea.

Instead of using these articles as what they really were, a trenchant criticism of the value of submarines and therefore as a reinforcement of the British thesis at the Washington Conference, some members of the British delegation seized upon Captain Castex's technical condonation of German submarine methods as proof of the spirit animating French naval men, if not the French delegation. The French delegates presently put matters in a truer light, but not before considerable harm had been done. This incident was the only serious blemish upon the otherwise splendid record of the British delegation at Washington.

The record of the French delegation, on the other hand, left much to be desired. Before leaving for Washington in October, I had seen in Paris the principal French delegates and also the President of the Republic, M. Millerand. To all of them I had explained the policy which Great Britain would be bound to follow at Washington. I had also suggested that, if France and England could work hand in hand and whole-heartedly in support of the American initiative, the success of the Conference would be assured, and that this proof of concord between the leading European Allies would be likely so to revive American interest in the affairs of Europe that the whole problem of Reparations and of European reconstruction would be greatly simplified. All the Frenchmen whom I saw professed hearty agreement with this view. But,

before the French delegation reached Washington, some sinister influence seems to have affected the judgment of the principal French delegates and to have convinced them that the Washington Conference would be essentially an American attack upon British naval supremacy which the British delegation would vigorously resist; and that, in the ensuing controversy, France would be in the position of *tertius gaudens*. In Washington the French delegation was certainly influenced for a time by a foolish notion of this kind; and it perceived its error too late to repair it. Questions of personal vanity also envenomed a position which, had it not been misconceived from the outset, might have been made the opening of a new and better chapter in the affairs of Europe and of the world.

THE CANNES CONFERENCE

When the French Prime Minister, M. Briand, left Washington early in December, he understood that some effort was needed to improve Anglo-French relations. Soon after reaching Paris he went to London and made a tentative agreement with Mr. Lloyd George for the holding of an inter-Allied Conference at Cannes in January, 1922, as a preliminary to the convocation, soon afterwards, of a great political and economic International Conference to which the Germans and the Russian Bolshevists should be invited. The idea of holding this Conference seems to have arisen when the British and French Governments learned that there could be no question of enlarging the Washington Conference so as to make it cover European economic questions. Through a Belgian channel, a suggestion that the Washington Conference should thus be enlarged, was conveyed to Washington towards the middle of December. So coldly had the suggestion been received that it was at once abandoned and the project of holding a European Economic Conference was substituted for it. Mr. Lloyd George understood that France would be unlikely to assent to his policy towards Germany and Russia unless French security were first safeguarded; and, as an inducement to M. Briand, he offered France a British pact guaranteeing French security for ten

years in place of the British and American undertakings given during the Paris Peace Conference. The American undertaking had been invalidated when the United States failed to ratify the Versailles Treaty; and, instead of upholding the guarantee on its own account, the British Government had taken a strictly legal view of the provision which made the undertaking an interdependent Anglo-American, not an individually British obligation. The British Government had thus seemed to construe, in niggardly fashion, its position in regard to France and to ignore both the fact that England was more directly interested than the United States in preserving French security, and the circumstance that, in return for the British and American undertakings, France had modified her policy on the left bank of the Rhine. By abandoning the undertaking, Great Britain had, moreover, lost power to exercise a moderating influence upon French policy towards Germany. At the end of 1921, Mr. Lloyd George realized, to some extent, the consequences of this abandonment. For this and for another reason he proposed to give France a British undertaking for ten years against any unprovoked German attack upon French soil.

A MISHAP

The Cannes Conference was convoked for the beginning of January, 1922. Information reached Washington that a thoroughgoing agreement between France and England was in sight; and, since there seemed reason to hope that such an agreement would influence favourably the attitude of the French delegation at Washington and thus promote the complete success of the Washington Conference, which was drawing to a close, the political centre of gravity appeared once more to lie in Europe. Therefore, I sailed for home on December 31, 1921. During the voyage a wireless message from *The Times* suggested, however, that it might be more important to go straight to Cannes than to return at once to London. So from Cherbourg I went to Cannes where, on the evening of my arrival, I met Mr. Harvey, the American Ambassador to London, who was attending the Cannes Conference

as American observer. Lord Curzon happened to be dining with him that night and was standing a few paces away. Mr. Harvey, eager to hear "all about Washington," asked me to drive with him and Mr. Richard Crane (lately American Minister at Prague) to Nice next morning where he suggested we might play a round of golf. We had hardly started in Mr. Crane's open car when, at a crossroads, a heavy closed car crashed into us. Though both cars had been going slowly, the violence of the impact threw Mr. Harvey and me high into the air. We fell on to the footpath some yards away. It appeared that the delinquent car was driven by a shell-shocked French chauffeur who, at the critical moment, had applied the accelerator pedal instead of the foot-brake; and that the car, which had been hired for the British delegation, was descending from Mr. Lloyd George's villa. Mr. Harvey and I were picked up badly shaken, taken back to the hotel and put to bed.

On learning of the mishap, the British and French Prime Ministers visited Mr. Harvey when, according to a trustworthy witness, some humorous banter was exchanged.

"Well, Mr. Ambassador," said Mr. Lloyd George, "I am very grieved about this accident; but you see what comes of keeping bad company."

"My dear Prime Minister," answered Mr. Harvey, "I cannot admit that my company or that of Mr. Richard Crane is bad enough to do any harm to Steed. Besides," he added teasingly, "there is enough circumstantial evidence to have you and Lord Curzon hanged."

"How do you make that out?" asked Mr. Lloyd George.

"Well," answered Mr. Harvey, "Lord Curzon was within hearing last night when I arranged with Steed to start at 9:30 this morning. We started punctually. We had hardly left this town when a car from your villa hit us. It was driven by a shell-shocked driver, so that there might be no moral responsibility; and it was empty, so that there might be no witnesses of the crime. What more evidence do you want?"

Mr. Lloyd George laughed heartily and said he was glad

to find that the shock had not spoiled the Ambassador's wit. Afterwards, Sir Edward Grigg brought me an expression of the Prime Minister's regret.

There was one flaw in Mr. Harvey's "circumstantial evidence." The car that smashed us was not empty. Some two years later, at No. 10 Downing Street, an officekeeper said to me, "I never see you, sir, without thinking of the Cannes Conference. I was in the car that nearly killed you and Mr. Harvey. I had been riding in front but, as it was chilly, I took a seat inside the car. I picked up a bit of the broken axle of your car and have it as a keepsake at home."

Unluckily, the Cannes Conference failed. It adopted, indeed, sundry resolutions as the basis of the proposed International Economic Conference at Genoa; but, before the Anglo-French Treaty of Guarantee could be fully considered, French political intrigues against M. Briand compelled him to return to Paris and to resign office. Thus France lost the chance of securing a British guarantee in substitution for that promised during the Paris Peace Conference. Though, in its draft form, the Cannes pact may not have been acceptable to her, it might have been amended, had M. Briand not been overthrown. His successor, M. Poincaré, sought, indeed, to widen it and to make it reciprocal; but his attitude, and that of the French Nationalist opinion which he represented, were not conducive to agreement. Nevertheless, the Cannes Conference produced one document of permanent interest. In reply to a memorandum from the Italian Delegation which had objected to the proposed Anglo-French pact, Mr. Lloyd George addressed to the Italian Delegation on January 11, 1922, a memorandum explaining that the Treaty

about to be concluded between Great Britain and France is not designed in any way to exclude Italy from the councils of the Great Allies or to weaken the close understanding which subsists between them.

It added:

Great Britain's special interest in the security of France's eastern frontiers against German attack has been revealed to all peoples in

the fierce light of war. Germany's invading armies in 1914 swept close to the Channel Ports and were finally held along a line in France and Flanders nearer than any part of the Continent to the English coast. The sound of German guns was heard in England daily for four years. England knows that, were Germany, in some future struggle, to succeed in planting her artillery upon the coast of France, London itself would be within the range of German shells. Not only Britain, but all the Dominions of the British Empire, gave unreservedly of their manhood and their wealth to overwhelm the common enemy, side by side with the French armies. The fields of France now cover many hundreds of thousands of British dead. The whole of the British Empire is represented amongst those graves. Britain, therefore, has an interest not less than that of France in ensuring that the sacrifices of the French and British peoples shall not have been made in vain.

In conclusion, this British memorandum stated that it was on these grounds that Great Britain had signed, together with the representatives of the United States, on June 28, 1919, a Treaty agreeing to come immediately to the assistance of France in the event of any unprovoked movement of aggression being made against her by Germany; and it added that, though that Treaty had hitherto been a dead letter,

the understanding which it contained influenced French policy in certain important respects during the negotiation of the Treaty of Versailles, and Great Britain therefore considers herself bound in honour to renew the pledge.

THE GENOA CONFERENCE

Among the motives for the movement in Paris against M. Briand, had been a suspicion that the International Economic Conference at Genoa, to which he had assented, would be used to coerce France into sanctioning a vague policy of "European reconstruction" before Germany had seriously attempted to pay reparations. Another motive was a belief that Mr. Lloyd George intended to use the programme for the Genoa Conference as his platform in a General Election which would be held in Great Britain before the Conference should meet. In this way, it was thought, the British Prime Minister would manage to go to Genoa with a mandate from

the British electorate, much as he had gone to the Paris Peace Conference after the General Election of December, 1918 — though with the difference that his mandate on that occasion had been to " make Germany pay " whereas his mandate at Genoa would be " to let Germany off " and to make an agreement with the Russian Bolshevists. These suspicions were not entirely groundless. No sooner had the Cannes Conference decided, early in January, 1922, to convene the Genoa Conference for the beginning of March, than statements were issued by the Prime Minister's secretariate in London that a dissolution of Parliament was impending and that a General Election would take place in Great Britain before the end of February. But these statements aroused the opposition of Sir George Younger, the chief organizer of the Conservative Party, who flatly declined to sanction a plan of which the effect might have been to give a further lease of life to the Conservative-Liberal Coalition of which Mr. Lloyd George was the head. Sir George Younger knew that the rank and file of his Party were becoming very dissatisfied with the Coalition and with Mr. Lloyd George's leadership. In consequence of his opposition, the idea of holding a General Election before the Genoa Conference had to be disavowed and abandoned.

Nevertheless, Mr. Lloyd George did not lose hope of making the results of the Genoa Conference an election platform for the future. He seems to have believed that an agreement with the Germans and the Bolshevists at Genoa would enable him to appeal so strongly to the Labour, and to some sections of the Liberal, electorate as to make him practically independent of Conservative support should the Conservatives revolt against him. His views were clearly foreshadowed in his semi-official organs. They carried on a violent campaign against the French Prime Minister, M. Poincaré, whom they compared with Nero, and they demanded at once a drastic reduction of the German Reparations Debt and the recognition of the Russian Bolshevists. In these circumstances, M. Poincaré decided not to attend the Genoa Conference but to send instead his colleague, M. Barthou, who had been instrumental in overthrowing M. Briand. In France, moreover, Nationalist

opinion was hardening in favour of the occupation of the Ruhr mining and industrial region of Germany — a project which had been mooted by the French two years earlier and had been opposed tenaciously by Mr. Lloyd George, though he had once assented to it in principle. Whenever French public men had spoken to me of the occupation of the Ruhr I had made no secret of my objections to it and had, again and again, warned them that it would involve France in serious difficulties and that, even should it ultimately lead to a Franco-German industrial agreement, its effect might well be to make France economically subject to Germany and to curtail French political independence. I had also criticized, privately and publicly, the French conception of the Reparations problem and had urged the expediency both of fixing the reparations debt at a definite, manageable total and of telling the French public frankly that the conceptions of German capacity to pay which had been current during the Paris Peace Conference and afterwards were hopelessly exaggerated. After the Cannes Conference I had written strongly, in despatches to *The Times*, against the French tendency to take what I called "a moneylender's view of the obligations of debtors rather than the broader-minded and farther-sighted merchant's view that holds the nursing of debtors back into something like financial health to be a condition of the eventual discharge of their engagements." One of the weakest points in the Allied position I had felt to be the reluctance of French public men to recognize the technical impossibility of transferring large sums of gold, or the equivalent of gold, from one country to another, except in the form of services or goods which the Allied countries could not easily afford to accept.

But equally reprehensible seemed to me the tendency of the British Government to play fast and loose with France. To agree with the French in public and to oppose them secretly was a policy bound to encourage the French Nationalists who were eager for "direct action" against Germany in the Ruhr. When, therefore, the Genoa Conference was ultimately convened for the beginning of April, with a vague programme of peace and reconciliation throughout Europe and a precise pro-

gramme of agreement with the Germans and the Bolshevists, I was convinced that the Conference must fail and, in failing, render European confusion worse confounded.

So strong was this conviction that I decided not to go to Genoa. But Northcliffe, whose health was rapidly failing, urged me, with the insistence of an invalid, to go; and at the last moment I assented against my better judgment. As no quarters were to be found, the Italian authorities kindly secured lodgings for me, together with some Italian officials, in a hotel where the bulk of the French delegation was quartered — a circumstance which afterwards exposed me to attacks in the House of Commons for having "gone to live with the French."

The course of the Conference speedily justified my fears. Badly prepared, worse managed, and aiming at objects other than its ostensible purpose, it ended in discreditable collapse. Nothing save preparation even more careful than that which had preceded the meeting of the Washington Conference, and complete antecedent agreement between the major Allies, could have made it even moderately successful. Neither of these conditions was observed. It became an orgy of intrigue and counter-intrigue, of pressure and counter-pressure. An attempt on the part of the British Prime Minister to revive the methods of the Paris Peace Conference — by placing control in the hands of a small executive committee — having been defeated, he began to negotiate privately with the Bolshevist delegates at his villa. The Germans, who had already made a draft agreement with the Bolshevists, thereupon imagined that they were being tricked; and they concluded with the Bolshevists a Russo-German Treaty of Alliance behind the back of the Conference. As a punishment, the Germans were excluded from the main work of the Conference though the action of the Bolshevists was condoned. After some weeks of acrimonious chaos, the Belgian delegation insisted that, before any agreement could be made with the Bolshevists, they should recognize the rights of foreign property-holders in Russia. The Belgian Government forbade its delegates to sign a European memorandum to the Bolshevists because this principle was not insisted

upon; and, after some hesitation, the French Government supported Belgium. Mr. Lloyd George retaliated by informing the French, directly and indirectly, that their support of the Belgian thesis had brought England and France to "a parting of the ways." A strained situation thus arose, and a despatch to *The Times* in which I gave the substance of Mr. Lloyd George's representations to the French, caused considerable stir in London. Mr. Lloyd George declared it to be totally unfounded, and M. Barthou, under British insistence, ended by denying its verbal precision. But, as the chief delegates at Genoa knew, and as documentary evidence in my possession shows, its substantial accuracy could not be challenged.

The event soon proved the Prime Minister's tactics to have been superfluous. Under orders from Moscow, the Bolshevists gave an entirely unacceptable reply to the European memorandum. Therefore, further negotiations with them were entrusted to a Conference of Experts at the Hague in June, which presently failed; and the Genoa Conference went towards its inevitable end. Some pious "economic resolutions" and a worthless "Pact of Non-Aggression" of a few months' duration were the only achievements of the thirty-four nations whose representatives had attended it. It was, as it was bound to be, a great failure which sorely discredited the system of diplomacy by improvised conferences; and its failure marked the beginning of the end of the British Coalition Government which it had been intended to conserve and to strengthen.

THE DEATH OF LORD NORTHCLIFFE

Before resuming work in London I was summoned urgently to Paris by Northcliffe, who had just bought practically the whole of Mr. John Walter's shares in *The Times* Publishing Company and had thus acquired, for the first time, complete control of *The Times* in his own right. I found him on the verge of collapse and accompanied him to Switzerland where Lady Northcliffe was awaiting him. His condition grew rapidly worse and, after securing facilities for his removal to London, I resumed my editorial duties. He died on August

14, 1922. Ten days before, I had received from him a final, pathetic message, "Give me a full page in *The Times* and a leading article by the best available writer *on the night*." We gave him more than that. *The Times* owed and owes him lasting gratitude, for he rescued it from decline and did much to vitalize it.

Those who imagined that Northcliffe's illness and death would cause *The Times* to waver never understood the spirit animating its staff. Though we knew that his death must involve changes which might affect our personal fortunes, we worked, night and day, as one man for the good of the paper. Rarely can a team of journalists have shown greater devotion to their newspaper than the staff of *The Times* showed while its fate hung in the balance. In October, 1922, it was sold to Major the Honourable John Jacob Astor, M.P., with whom Mr. John Walter was associated; and, soon after the General Election of November 15, 1922, my active connection with it came to an end. The editorship was resumed by my friend and predecessor, Mr. Geoffrey Dawson. I had the satisfaction of knowing that he would find its power undiminished and its influence upon public affairs as great as ever. During the autumn of 1922, it had been instrumental in preventing both a breach with France and war with Turkey in connection with the "Chanak crisis"; and in persuading Mr. Bonar Law that it was his duty to overthrow the discredited Coalition and to restore Party Government. Though I speak without knowledge of all the circumstances, I have some reason to think that Mr. Bonar Law might not have been willing to become Prime Minister and to face the General Election of November, 1922, had he not known that he could reckon fully upon the support of *The Times*. Before he went to the famous Carlton Club meeting which brought down the Coalition Government, I predicted to him that an appeal to the country would give him a following of some three hundred and fifty Conservative members of Parliament — an estimate much higher than the official estimate of the Conservative Party organizers. The election actually gave him three hundred and forty-three, with a clear majority of nearly eighty.

Thus I left *The Times*, feeling that, thanks to the devoted work of my colleagues, it was again on the top of the wave. Though I no longer wielded journalistic influence, Mr. Bonar Law consulted me about the funding of the British War Debt to the United States and upon the best means of explaining to the French the real significance of the Reparations Settlement which he had proposed to them in January, 1923, but which they had, very short-sightedly, rejected. These matters belong, however, to the history of the Reparations controversy rather than to a personal narrative which, for the present, ceases with the end of my more than twenty-six years' service of *The Times*. That great journal, and the men who have made and make it, will ever have a firm hold on my affection and gratitude. To it and to them I owe whatever I may have been able to do for the public good, and whatever insight I may have gained into the affairs of nations during a period filled by the prologue to a great historical drama and by the drama itself. If my minor chronicle should serve to render some scenes and phases of that drama more comprehensible to those who witnessed them, or to those who may wish to understand them in retrospect, my purpose will have been fulfilled.

CHAPTER XX

CONCLUSION

SOME thirty years ago I listened in Paris to a public discussion on the philosophy of history. The speakers were two leading French Socialists, Jean Jaurès, the great orator, and Paul Lafargue, a son-in-law of Karl Marx. With poetical passion, Jaurès contended that historical changes are mainly the result of spiritual influences which, in various ways and in different degrees, inspire men to struggle for a realization of their ideals. Lafargue replied by insisting upon the materialistic view of history which Marx propounded, and by claiming that idealism or religion had merely been a cloak for the realities of economic strife. In a phrase which I have quoted elsewhere, he boasted that "Marx turned God out of History."

Some years later, when the absence of idealism in his own life had made him feel that it was no longer worth living, Lafargue and his wife committed suicide. Jaurès remained a leader of French social thought until he fell to the bullet of a reactionary fanatic on the eve of the war. Once a passage from his writings was even read by a French bishop in a Lenten sermon at Lyons. When devout ladies afterwards wished to know the name of the divine whose words had edified them, the Bishop asked them to guess it. Their guesses ranged from Chrysostom to Father Didon. At last, the Bishop whispered into their scandalized ears the name of the "Reverend Father" Jaurès.

I have often pondered over the two views of history held by Jaurès and Lafargue. Though neither of them is exhaustive, and though the truth may well lie somewhere between the two, I think that the idealist view lies nearer than the materialist to the heart of things. "To turn God out of History"

is a formidable business. However potent may be economic pressure, over-population, famine, pestilence, or climate, their influence seems to me to have been weaker at many critical epochs in the history of civilized humanity than that of the ideals which men and nations have cherished. Nor has reflection upon the War of 1914 and its causes altered my belief. It is still too early to judge whether the war marked a definite turn for the better in the fortunes of mankind or whether further disasters will be needed to convince the present or a future generation that national and international ways of life must be changed unless civilization itself is to perish. That grave issue still hangs in the balance. Some, indeed, ask whether the war was "worth while." To us who knew the world before the war, that question seems beside the point. Is freedom, moral and political, "worth while"? In thinking of the war and its sequel we are, besides, too apt to remember its vicissitudes, the havoc it wrought, and the wrangling that followed it rather than the profound and, on the whole, beneficent changes which it brought about. It swept away three powerful Imperial systems — the German, the Austro-Hungarian, and the Russian. It overthrew polities founded upon mediæval conceptions and it carried forward the work of European liberation which the French Revolution and Napoleon began. As the military exponent of the French Revolution, Napoleon not only destroyed what remained of the Holy Roman Empire "of German nation," but he infused the spirit of nationality into a dozen submerged races. The Holy Alliance strove to undo this work, and undid it in part; but it could not stifle permanently the German or the Italian aspirations towards freedom and unity. Those aspirations led the Italians to Rome in 1870. In a Bismarckian perversion, they also led the German Princes to Versailles in 1871. The enthronement of the Hohenzollerns as hereditary German Emperors implied, however, the strengthening in Germany of the mediævalism against which the liberal partisans of German unity had long contended; and the German people were presently corrupted by the material prosperity which the Hohenzollern Empire fostered. Moreover, the League of the Three

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Emperors, like the Triple Alliance that replaced it, put the interests of dynasties once more above the welfare of peoples. This modern mediævalism, strengthened by the support of science and by that of vast business organizations, was bound to expand and dominate or to perish in the attempt. It could not live as an equal among equals. The German watchword "World Mastery or Downfall" tersely stated the alternatives confronting it. Eager to extend their sway, politically and economically, to impose their *Kultur* upon larger and larger sections of the human race, the Germans of the Hohenzollern Empire conceived their own political system and ways of life as intrinsically superior to all others. German philosophy from Hegel to Nietzsche — without forgetting Marx, who dreamed of the world-dictatorship of a proletariat inspired by German-Jewish ideas — had built up this conception. The rest of the world had to choose between submission and resistance to it.

* * * *

That was the plainest issue in August, 1914. But other issues were linked with it. Among them, none was greater than that of the future of the non-Germanic and non-Magyar peoples of Central Europe. For them, the question was whether they should be permanently enslaved by a pan-German Empire, stretching from Belgium across Central and Southeastern Europe far into Asia and Africa, or whether they should burst their bonds and gain freedom once more to share, as independent nations, in European development. The importance of this issue was tardily perceived by the Western Allies. Indeed, as long as the Russian Empire stood, they could not face it frankly in its bearing upon Poland and the border races of Russia. Yet upon it hung the fortunes of the war. Practically, this issue resolved itself into the question whether Allied policy should seek to preserve Austria-Hungary or whether it should deliberately aim at the liberation of the subject Hapsburg races, without prejudice to their eventual regrouping in some more elastic form of Central European organization.

As I have explained, my own mind was made up on this point as early as 1909 when the High Treason trial at Agram and the Friedjung trial in Vienna showed that the Hapsburg Monarchy had lost whatever inner virtue it may once have possessed. The course of the Bosnian annexation crisis had already proved it to be bound, hand and foot, to Germany. Masaryk, who knew Austria-Hungary far better than I, reached the same conclusion about the same time, though he only told me of it during the war. To him more than to any man belongs the credit for having brought the Allied Governments in Europe, and the Government of the United States, to some understanding of this crucial truth; though not until the eleventh hour, under pressure of the German offensive in March, 1918, did their comprehension of it triumph over adverse influences.

* * * *

Of those influences I am persuaded that the power of international Jewry was the strongest. International Clericalism, proceeding from the — to my mind — mistaken view of the interests of the Roman Church which has prevailed in the Vatican and among the Jesuits since the Counter-Reformation of the 16th and 17th centuries, certainly worked to save the Hapsburgs and, with them, the pan-German cause, as did the snobbishness and dull Conservatism of small aristocratic cliques in Allied countries. Yet Jewish influence was more persistent and more efficient. Had it been united, and could it have been coherently directed, it might well have prevailed; but, in point of fact, Jewish idealism served, in part, to counteract the work of Jewish finance and of Jewish cosmopolitan agencies. This Jewish idealism was of two kinds. Though, in one of its forms, it strengthened for a time the pro-German and pan-German tendencies of Jewish finance by bringing Jewish hatred of Imperial Russia into line with Jewish attachment to Germanism, its support of Germanism slackened when the Russian Empire fell. Those who hold that Jewry is always guided by material considerations are apt to be wofully wrong. The gulf that severed Western Europe from Russia

during the latter half of the 19th century was dug and kept open chiefly by Jewish resentment of Russian persecution of the Jews. Yet that resentment sprang also from Jewish detestation of the Russian Holy Synod and of the Russian Orthodox Church as survivals of mediæval Christianity and as promoters of a crusade for the possession of "Tsarigrad" (Constantinople) and of the Holy Places. Against Russian Christian fanaticism was ranged an intense Jewish fanaticism hardly to be paralleled save among the more militant sects of Islam. This Jewish fanaticism allied itself with the anti-Russian forces before and during the earlier years of the war. It abated only when the Russian Revolution of March 1917 and the subsequent advent of Bolshevism, largely Jewish in doctrine and in *personnel*, overthrew the Russian Empire and the Russian Orthodox Church. The joy of Jewry at these events was not merely the joy of triumph over an oppressor but was also gladness at the downfall of hostile religious and semi-religious institutions — a joy, moreover, in which the Vatican shared, as its attitude towards the Bolshevist delegates to the Genoa Conference of April, 1922, significantly indicated.

* * * *

When international Jewish sentiment had thus ceased to be actively pro-German, another form of Jewish idealism came more effectively into play. The Zionist, or Jewish National, movement which was started by the late Dr. Theodore Herzl in the last decade of the 19th century, had fired the imaginations of millions of the younger and poorer Jews throughout the world. Frowned upon and discouraged by the wealthier "assimilationist" and "semi-assimilationist" Jews in various countries, it had, nevertheless, kindled in the Jewish masses a spirit akin to that of the Maccabeans and had acted upon them as a regenerating force. Towards the end of 1916, mainly through the instrumentality of the late Sir Mark Sykes, then an Under-Secretary to the British War Cabinet, and of Mr. James A. Malcolm, a prominent British Armenian, the Zionist organizations in Europe and the United States began to

identify themselves with the Allied cause. Mr. Malcolm rightly urged that the Jews were less pro-German than anti-Russian and that their national aspirations were not inimical to the Allied cause. As a result of discussions with Zionist leaders in England, especially Dr. Weizmann, Mr. Sokolow, and Dr. Greenberg, communications were established with prominent American Zionists who used their influence in favour of American participation in the war. The German Government had, at various times, approached the Zionists, but had finally estranged them by insisting that German rather than Hebrew should be the recognized Jewish language. Several members of the British Government were, on the contrary, frankly in sympathy with Zionism; and, in November, 1917, the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Balfour, made an official declaration in favour of the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. Not only did this declaration increase the interest of American Jewry in the war, but it tended to neutralize the influence in Russia of the pro-German Jewish Socialists who were working with the Bolshevists. The efforts subsequently made to establish a Jewish National Home in Palestine and the difficulties inherent both in the nature of things and in some aspects of the Jewish character, belong rather to the history of the Zionist movement than to the consideration of the broad factors that operated in favour of an Allied victory; but it is incontestable that Zionism played a part in the defeat of the pan-Germanism with which so many Jewish financiers and business interests had been identified. General Ludendorff is alleged to have said, after the war, that " the Balfour Declaration was the cleverest thing done by the Allies in the way of propaganda," and that he wished Germany had thought of it first. This is a truly German view. The Balfour Declaration was not intended merely as propaganda. It expressed the sincere intention of the British Government. It proceeded from recognition of the fact that the soundest and healthiest element in modern Jewry is the spirit which prompts Jews to be proud of their race and to seek, as Jews, openings for their great gifts, rather than as what some Zionists call

"one hundred and five per cent." Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, or Americans.

The future of Jewry cannot be foreseen. Since the war, anti-Semitism has revived in many countries. Jewish speculation in the debased currencies of Europe has accentuated hostility towards Jews in general; and Jewish association with Bolshevism has not tended to decrease it. Should the Russian peasantry throw off the "dictatorship of the proletariat" set up by Lenin and Trotsky in the name of their prophet Marx, the world may witness massacres beside which the pogroms of Tsardom would pale into insignificance. Then again a great gulf might yawn between the Western world and Russia — a gulf even harder to bridge than that over which the Franco-Russian Alliance was built at the end of last century. "Anti-Semitism" is no cure for the evils which the presence of a disproportionate number of Jews usually bring upon non-Jewish communities. The cure, if cure there be, can only lie in the patient and sympathetic study of Jewry by non-Jews, and in the leadership of Jewry itself by Jews intelligent and courageous enough to perceive the limitations of the Jewish genius and to take them into account in framing Jewish policy.

* * * *

Like many another problem, in appearance insoluble, the Jewish question may ultimately be affected by the greatest result of the war — the establishment of the League of Nations. Without the inspiration of the ideal which the League of Nations represents — albeit imperfectly, as yet — I doubt whether the Allied and Associated peoples could have won the war. The League embodies the aspirations of the better part of mankind towards a settlement of international disputes otherwise than by arms. Its aim is to subject the use of force in the affairs of nations to rules and restrictions like those which, in civilized communities, govern the treatment of wrong-doers. Wittingly or unwittingly, its establishment was a step towards the federalization of peoples; though, like most steps in human progress, it was inspired by a negative

rather than by a positive purpose — the avoidance of recognized evil rather than the achievement of an ideal good. Whether or not President Wilson was wise to insist on putting the amended Covenant of the League into the Treaty of Versailles, and on making the League the warden and moderator of the Treaty, is now mainly an academic question. Both the Treaty and the League are in being. The one may be progressively improved by consent through the agency of the other; but neither the one nor the other can be upset, or be drastically revised from without, unless the chief fruit of the war is to wither and a disappointed humanity is to fall into a chaos compared with which the qualified mediævalism of the 19th century would seem to have been a Golden Age.

Yet, if the League of Nations is to fulfill its purpose, it will need to be completed by the association with it of the great peoples who either hold aloof from it or are excluded from membership. Of these peoples — the Americans, the Germans, and the Russians — the Germans hold the clearest position. They can, if they wish, qualify for admission to the League by shouldering manfully the consequences of defeat in a war for which the German Imperial Government was chiefly responsible and in which the German peoples were not unwilling accomplices. A generation may pass before the Germans are able to view the war in perspective and to recover from the moral effects of the isolation it entailed; and even a generation may not suffice unless there arise in Germany new leaders and teachers endowed with vision to see the truth and with courage to tell it to their own people. The admission of Germany to the League of Nations might hasten this process. The Allied peoples and Governments might also accelerate it by friendly treatment of Germany when her recognition of her past errors has clearly hardened into a resolve to eschew them in future. But it is essential that the renewal of friendly intercourse with Germany should not involve, on the part of Allied peoples and governments, any retrospective weakening of their grip upon the principles and ideals in whose name they fought and won the war.

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President Wilson's phrase that the object of the war was to make the world "safe for democracy" has been much derided. Nevertheless, it expresses a fundamental truth which only needs accurate definition to become axiomatic. Historically, "democracy" is a negative concept. It implied the imposition of restrictions upon absolute or arbitrary rule. It was the negation of the doctrine of Divine Right. Its purpose was to protect communities and their individual members against the dangers inherent in government by monarchs or oligarchies. But it remains to be proved that the transformation of this original, negative conception of democracy into a positive doctrine that, the wider the "bounds of freedom" are drawn, the safer and the healthier a community will be, is a sane and sound development. The battle between the representative system in democracy and the tendencies which aim at "direct" government "by the people," has yet to be fought out; and, before it is won, the principles of individual liberty may need to be stated afresh. Here, again, issue is joined between negative and positive concepts. Broadly speaking, liberal principles imply the removal of as many restrictions upon the freedom of individuals as the welfare of the "greater number" may permit. They are incompatible with the more modern tendencies which would establish the tyranny of organized masses, or of armed "popular" dictatorships over individual citizens, no matter whether those tendencies take the form of "Bolshevism" or of "Fascism." The world cannot be "safe for democracy" until these tendencies have been vanquished or placed under restraint for the general good.

Hence, it is impossible to speak with confidence of the future of Russia or of her progress towards membership of the League of Nations. She may have to pass through more than one bloody ordeal before her peoples find the path of ordered freedom. In the long run, she may, indeed, prove to have rendered, inadvertently, a service to civilization by becoming an experimental ground for the devastating theories of Karl Marx. Meanwhile, those Western countries in which Bolshevist doctrines have, in part, perverted the ethical elements in the Socialist and Labour movements; and those where, as in Italy,

Bolshevism has acted as an irritant productive of Nationalist and semi-military reactions, may find it no easy task to eliminate the poison from their social systems. This cannot be done merely by unintelligent denunciations of Bolshevism or by the establishment of counter-tyrannies. It must be done by thinkers and political leaders capable of restating and of inculcating upon the people the doctrine of the duties and the rights of individuals in the form of a new Liberalism that shall take full account of economic and scientific progress.

* * * *

This restatement of democratic doctrine is most likely to come from Europe. Wide as is the field for democratic essay in the United States, one important element seems to be lacking in the political life of the American people — the element of risk. The United States has not lived under any tangible menace to its security — a great advantage which has also entailed drawbacks. In Europe, the sense of risk lends reality to questions which might otherwise be academic. But while the American people are averse from participation in the politics of Europe and in the risks which those politics involve, European efforts to consolidate the moral and political gains of the war, which America helped to win, will appeal powerfully to American idealism. If the United States is ever to renew its "association" with Europe, the European peoples may need to revise their views of American intervention in the war. The wonder is not that the American nation — separated from Europe by more than three thousand miles of sea and, as regards some of its regions, by another three thousand miles of land — should have withdrawn from a Peace Settlement which it did not and could not understand, but rather that it should have come into the war at all. In many ways, the revulsion of feeling that caused the United States to reject the Treaty of Versailles and to cut adrift from Europe after the war was more natural, in view of the physical detachment of the United States from Europe, than American participation in the war. To treat this physical detachment as a

negligible factor and to imagine that the American people as a whole — among whom the influence of the dwellers in the Middle West and the West is increasingly powerful — will readily return to the position of 1917 and 1918, is to cherish a fond illusion. The truth is rather that the American people will be drawn towards Europe in proportion as the policies and the conduct of European nations appeal at once to American idealism and seem to offer the United States some prospect of advantageous coöperation. Europeans ought never to forget that the United States has its own problems to solve; that within its immense territory, still largely unpeopled, it has wide scope for its energies; that the issues raised by the opening of the Panama Canal are turning its eyes southward; and that questions may arise in the Pacific which will deflect American attention from Europe and European troubles. Yet, as the Washington Conference showed, the Pacific Ocean may form a link between the United States and those European countries which have interests to safeguard in Pacific waters; and, as that Conference also showed, the power of hastening or retarding the association of the United States with Europe lies chiefly in the hands of Great Britain and France.

* * * *

They, too, hold the key to the European problem itself. It has grown worse with their estrangement and their attempts to pursue divergent courses. Critics of an Anglo-French Entente have consistently failed to suggest any sound alternative policy for either country. A French attempt to dominate Europe single-handed, or with the sole support of the new Central European nations established by the Peace Treaties would, sooner or later, lead to another European upheaval in which the sympathies of the rest of the world might not support French policy. A British association with Germany against France would as inevitably bring on a conflict the very idea of which the British people abhor. Doubtless, the desire of the French people for security has inspired, directly and indirectly, many of the vagaries that have weaned British feel-

ing from France; while the insularity of British conceptions of Europe has dulled, in the British people, the sense which they acquired, tardily and temporarily, during the war that the security of France is as essentially a British interest as the security of Great Britain is an interest of France. The contingent truth that the security of Germany is a joint Franco-British interest has, however, been more fully perceived on the British than on the French side of the English Channel. German security can be peacefully safeguarded only under the auspices of the League of Nations when once Germany shall have accepted the new order in Europe; but the League of Nations itself cannot thrive unless France and Great Britain go hand in hand. Through it they can ensure the existence of the new nations which their common sacrifices helped to create. They can also establish solid ground upon which the United States may set its foot should it ever desire again to tread the path which President Wilson descried. And they can, if they will, bring Europe nearer to some form of federation that would at once banish the danger of war and open new fields for coöperation to her peoples.

* * * *

For this to be possible, England must be true to the traditions she has — albeit with some lapses — upheld for centuries. She must not live for herself alone or imagine that her physical severance from the continent of Europe entitles her to cherish insular notions, however much those notions may be universalized by solidarity between her and the self-governing Dominions of the British Empire. Her people need to strengthen their grasp upon the principle that their existence is bound up with the preservation of freedom. They need to understand that, while they have curtailed the rights of the Crown and have transformed its functions into those of an hereditary presidency over the nation and the Empire, other forms of arbitrary rule may be more dangerous and more insidious than those derived from the Divine Right of Kings. Some of these dangers are inherent in the growth of official-

dom and in its deadening effect upon the sense of individual responsibility. Others lie in the perversion of Parliamentary Government into a system under which groups and cliques and interests control the executive. Others, again, proceed from the interpenetration of the official world and high finance, and from the deification of political economy as the source of all wisdom in public affairs. Yet others are involved in the efforts of class or trade organizations to impose their tyranny upon the public, careless of its welfare so long as their immediate points be gained. All these tendencies need to be watched, fought and curbed, if a healthy public spirit is to be preserved in England, and if she is to keep in the world the place she held of old. Her very detachment from the Continent should help her to view its affairs serenely, while the spirit of compromise and the sense of practical reality which are joined, in her people, with an almost mystical faith in the virtue of trying to do what is right because it is right, may enable her still to set an unostentatious and beneficent example.

* * * *

The monk to whom Giovanni dalle Bande Nere made his soldierly confession, understood, with a truly Catholic intelligence, that it was enough — and shrove him. He exercised not merely the charity that "shall cover a multitude of sins" but the charity born of comprehension that men — and peoples — who live and work according to their talents, most nearly obey the injunction to strive after sincerity as the cardinal principle of life. Throughout these pages I have sought to be sincere; and, despite the frankness of many passages in my narrative, I trust that charitable readers will grant me some measure of absolution. I believe that, in the main, I saw rightly, spoke truly, and tried to do things worth doing. Not otherwise do I hope to speak and to act during as many of the next thirty years as may be allotted to me.

THE END

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1929

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA